

also see # 22 and  
group interview # 28

Project I.D. No. <sup>10</sup>22

NAME: Miyake, Aiko DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_ PLACE OF BIRTH: Okayama  
Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: F Marital Status: M Education: \_\_\_\_\_

PRE-WAR:

Date of arrival in U.S.: 7/1921 Age: \_\_\_\_\_ M.S. M Port of entry: Seattle  
Occupation/s: 1. Housewife/Sewing 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Place of residence: 1. Portland, Oregon 2. Japan 3. Came to Sacramento  
Religious affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_ in 1924  
Community organizations/activities: Japanese Prefecture Group

EVACUATION:

Name of assembly center: Waltera Assembly Center  
Name of relocation center: Tule Lake, Ca & Topaz, Utah  
Dispensation of property: Sold/Piano's instructor's home Names of bank/s: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jobs held in camp: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Jobs held outside of camp: \_\_\_\_\_  
Left camp to go to: Chicago, Illinois (In 1944)

POST-WAR:

Date returned to West Coast: 1947  
Address/es: 1. Chicago, Illinois (3 yrs) 2. Sacramento, California  
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Religious affiliation: Christian Church  
Activities: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of interviewer: <sup>H. TAKAEABE</sup> Helen Akune/E. Hironaka Date: <sup>1971</sup> Fall 1970 Place: Sacramento, Ca.

Marslata Luni Carter



NAME: MRS. A. MIYAKE

AGE:

BIRTHDATE:

BIRTH PLACE:

WHAT YEAR AND AGE DID YOU COME TO THE U.S.: 1921

MAJOR OCCUPATION: House wife

RELOCATION CAMP: TULE LAKE

INTERVIEWED DATE: Sep 21 1971 Takarabe

INTERVIEWER: REVERAND TAKARABE

TRANSLATED DATE:

TRANSLATOR: MRS. SUMI CARTER



NAME: MRS. AI MIYAKE

Q. Shall we do it in here? At first I'll ask you about the time you lived in Japan. Where did you come from?

A. Okayama prefecture.

Q. Where about in Okayama?

A. ~~Takamachi~~ *Takamachi*

Q. What was your family's occupation? Were they farmers?

A. Yes.

Q. How many children were in your family? How many brothers and sisters did you have?

A. There were eight of them.

Q. Eight of them?

A. Yes, all of them are living.

Q. Were you the oldest?

A. I was the second child.

Q. Before you came to the United States, there were a lot of events that happened while you were in Japan, such as the Sino-Japanese War, the Russo-Japanese War, World War I, the Manchu Conflict, etc.. Do you remember the Sino-Japanese War?

A. No, I don't.

Q. How about the Russo-Japanese War?

A. It happened when I was about five. I don't remember very much about it, but I do recall that there was a lantern parade. It must



have been when the war was over. I remember also we sang the song "Japanese Won, Japanese Won, Russo Lost".

Q. How about World War I?

A. It was the time I was going to high-school.

Q. What do you remember?

A. I remember very little. I remember that Tsingtao fell. It was one day in fall when I had gone to a picnic, far away in the mountains. We came back by boat in the night. The people in the town were very excited. The lanterns were lit. The people were running around. I heard that Tsingtao had fallen and that they were going to have a lantern parade.

Q. World War I, affected mainly Europe. Japan was not very much affected was it?

A. No, it was not. At that time Japan had a treaty with the allies. Germany had occupied Tsingtao. Russia got Port Arthur then. The Japanese attacked Tsingtao and took it away from Germany.

Q. How about the Manchu Conflict?

A. I was here in the United States then.

Q. How much education did you receive in Japan?

A. After graduation from high-school, I attended a normal school (Shihan Nibu). Many students who wanted to become teachers went to normal school for four years after finishing the eighth grade, but the school I went to you entered after finishing four years of high-school. I had to learn within one year how to teach children, the management of children, the history of education, child psychology etc.. There were so many books to read in one year.



Q. After four years of high-school you went to normal school?

A. Yes, when you finished normal school you received a teaching certificate. You could teach up to eighth grade with it. There were alternatives, some of the graduated could only teach up to six grade, and some of them could only teach sewing in elementary schools.

Q. Do you know about the teachers colleges (Koto Shihan)?

A. The teachers colleges were different from the school I went to. After graduation from teachers college you could teach in a high-school. When I was in high-school my teacher asked me about my chances of going to teachers college. I asked my father and he said, "If I send you I must send the others too". I had so many brothers and sisters. Besides many girls got married after the school anyway. I decided a normal school was good enough for me.

Q. Not many girls went to high-school then?

A. You are right. There were not many.

Q. What size of town did you live in?

A. I lived on the edge of the town.

Q. How many population?

A. Around 5,000 to 6,000.

Q. How many girls went to girls high-school? Very few?

A. From my elementary class perhaps three. Some of the girls came from the seventh grade, maybe three or four of them. The high-school I went to also had a vocational school where you learned sewing, home economics, etc.. Some of the other girls went there. (Translator's note: At that time most girls and boys not going to high-school completed free seventh and eighth grades. The elementary school ended at the sixth grade. The



high-school required tuition. These girls from the seventh grade changed their plans and went onto high-school.)

Q. How many students were in the class?

A. If I remember correctly, there were around thirty.

Q. How many entered from your elementary school?

A. There were three of them.

Q. How many girls went to normal school from your high-school class?

A. There were three from my class.

Q. How large was the class?

A. Do you mean the high-school class?

Minister. Yes.

A. A little more than thirty.

Q. From that class only three of them went to the normal school?

A. Yes, but there was a girl who came in to the high-school after the eighth grade (Koto-Ka) so if I count her there were four of us.

Q. Do you remember the great Kanto earthquake?

A. Yes, at that time I happened to be living in Japan. There were many rumors. Something about the Koreans were rioting. My brother was living in Tokyo then. He came home in the confusion and told the family that there were lots of chances for money making. He wanted to sell some of our family's assets to help him in his money making scheme.

Q. What did your family do?

A. We did nothing. The relatives were against the idea.

Q. What about the Koreans? I remember my grandmother mentioned something about this also.

A. There were stories about stealing.



Q. Did they do the bad things?

A. Yes.

Minister. My grandfather remembered that someone told him, "You had better shave your mustache. You'll be mistaken for a Korean".

Q. Do you remember the tidal wave or plague?

A. No.

Q. What were the most memorable things that you remember of Japan? Including happy or sad things.

A. The happy times I had were New Years, Obon (fall ceremony of Buddhism) and the shrine festivals.

Q. What did you do on New Years ?

On those days we played Hanetsuki (similar to badminton) Sugoroku (Monopoly like game) and Karuta (a card game).

Q. Karuta, you mean one hundred poems by one hundred poets?

A. Yes, I wasn't too good at it. The making of rice cakes for the New Year was a happy memory too. Everyone got up very early in the morning. All the neighbors got together and made the rice cakes.

Q. Did your area have the custom of Otoshidama?

A. Please?

Minister: The children go around saying "Happy New Year". The neighbors and relatives give the children some spending money in return, ten yen, fifteen yen, maybe in your time more like five sen, ten ~~sen~~,

A. I remember the word "Otoshidama" but it is not very clear to me what I did.

Minister: Let me see what else....

A. Festivals.



Q. What kinds?

A. Hachiman, Oinari, etc., there were some festivals in summer too, but in November and December we had big festivals. There were festival events all along the bank of the river. There was a ferry boat on the river. A big bridge was put across the river. There were many people that came from far away places. There were many beggars on the river bank. Near by the shrine there were lots of shows and people selling old fashioned candy such as cotton candy, stone candy, etc., those goodies were only sold at the festivals so they were more precious. There were also Nozoki (penny arcades). There were other festivals too, Uji-Gami (native gods), Hachiman (a warrior god), Obon (a Buddhism ceremony), but those were not as large as the ones I mentioned before.

Q. What was the largest festival?

A. It was Oinari.

Q. Oinari? Was this worshipping the fox?

A. Yes, I believe so. I never gave much thought about it. I heard something about that you put some fried bean curds in the front of the shrine and the fox comes out and eats them. The shrine's priest was a high-school teacher. He taught Japanese.

Q. How about Hachiman? Is it worshipping Genji? (an old noble warrior)

A. Yes, I think so.

Q. What did your family believe in?

A. Shingon Shu (a Buddhist sect).

Q. Who established it?

A. Who was it.... It was one of the oldest Buddhist sects in Japan.

Q. Was he one of the poets in "One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets"?



A. He started in the Koya Mountains. I have forgotten lots of things.

Q. I've forgotten too. When did you hear about Christ?

A. When I was a child there was a play-mate who was a daughter of a minister of a Christian faith. She was always saying "My grandmother is a star in the sky".

Q. What did you hear about the Christians?

A. I don't remember too much about it although I remember Yaso Masa. He was a farmer. I thought his name was Yaso Masa but really Yaso meant Christian in Japanese. I guess he became a Christian and therefore the people called him Yaso, a Christian. There was a church in the town, but I never went. I remember reading a gospel once. I don't remember when.

Q. Who brought it to you?

A. Probably my brother. I don't remember clearly.

Q. Was there any social trouble in Japan? Prior to your coming to the United States?

A. It was the time that World War I was over, momentary a peace time. It was the Come Sodo (rice riot).

Q. What was it?

A. Some hungry poor people got together and looted some rich people.

Q. Did it happen in your town?

A. No, it did not happen in my town.

Q. What was the reason that you came to America? Your marriage?

A. Yes. There weren't good job opportunities in Japan. I thought that life would be better in America. My brother-in-law owned a few houses and where my husband came from they produced straw-mats. My brother-in-law suggested that they engage in a business there or in Manchuria, but



my husband wanted to return to America. I had heard a rather pessimistic stories about America that there were differences between what people believe and the actual conditions. Myself, I never thought of going to America.

Q. When you got married did you know that you were coming to America?

A. No, I had no idea. I thought that we would be living in Japan.

Q. What did your husband do for a living when he was here?

A. He was in the express business till he came back to Japan.

Q. What was it?

A. It was delivering things.

Q. I see, it was hard labor wasn't it?

A. I don't think it was too hard. It was not like these days. He sold that business when he left the U.S.

Q. What did he do then?

A. He worked at the cannery, a salmon cannery.

Q. I'll go back for a little. I'll ask you about your trip to the States. When did you leave Japan?

A. In July, the fifth or sixth, I think.

Q. In what year?

A. 1921.

Q. Did you stop at Hawaii?

A. No, we stopped at Seattle first then Portland.

Q. What kind of people were on the ship?

A. Let me see...Many of them were just like us, not well off, taking the economy class trip.

Q. What was the condition of the voyage? Was it crowded?



A. It wasn't too bad. It wasn't too good either. There were rows of bunk beds that I remember.

Q. How large was the ship? How many people were on board?

A. I don't remember anymore.

Q. How long did the trip take?

A. Perhaps two weeks.

Q. What were the things that you remember while you were on the ship?

A. The first two or three days I was sea-sick. I thought that we don't know a single soul on the ship, but there was a man that my husband knew. He came from Kyushu, an educated fine person. I don't remember much about it anymore... I remember that I was crying sometimes.

Q. What did you think about the States? I mean before landing in the States?

A. I guess I was a very insensitive person. I didn't give it much thought.

Q. Did you think that this was destiny?

A. No, like I said, I did not give it much thought.

Q. When you landed in the States what was your first impression? Did you land at Seattle?

A. Yes.

Q. What was your first impression?

A. I'm hazy about what I felt at first. I remember that I thought the market was huge. The cantaloupes were stacked up like a mountain.

Q. You went through the immigration office, didn't you?

A. Yes.

Q. How did they treat you?

A. It wasn't too bad.



Q. What did you do at first, after arriving in the States?

A. From Washington State we went to Portland. We visited my husband's old acquaintances, then we went to Astoria's cannery. I ate some food which was cooked by a Chinese. The people there were saying delicious, but to me it was bad. In the cannery the married couples lived in the houses, but the bachelors lived in the dormitory, eating the Chinese cook's food. They asked me if I wanted to work there since I had no children. I worked there one day then they told me that there was someone who wanted work. I worked only one day the whole time that I was there.

Q. Was the cannery run by a Japanese?

A. Yes, it was. Everyday I read a book or did some knitting.

Q. Did you eat with your husband?

A. Yes. Sometimes the bachelors asked me if I could make Osushi. I had no experience and besides it was hard to cook rice with a little kerosen stove. I went to see the Chinese cook and asked him to cook rice for Osushi.

Q. What was your first impression when you first saw a Caucasian?

A. It is hard to say.....nothing special. I felt that I had come from a far place.

Q. What were the sad things that happened to you while you were here?

A. I couldn't say. The really sad things didn't happen to me.

Q. How about the happy things?

A. I didn't experience the really happy things either.

Q. Have you had any grievances?

A. No, I guess I had an uneventfull life.



Q. How about funny things?

A. A funny thing was my English. It wasn't really communicable. When I said 'No', I meant 'Yes', in English. 'Yes', was 'No'.

Q. How did you get married? What I mean, was it by arrangement?

A. Yes, my mother's sister married Miyake. I married her husband's younger brother. My uncle-in-law made the arrangement.

Q. Did you know your husband before you married him?

A. No, I didn't. I had heard that one of Uncle-in-law's brother was in the States.

Q. Did you see him before the wedding?

A. Yes, my uncle-in-law brought him to my house one day.

Q. You mean your uncle-in-law accompanied him?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you have tea or something with him?

A. Yes, I brought tea for him, but I couldn't say a word. I glanced at him once and ran away.

Q. Did you know then that the marriage was arranged?

A. Yes, I had been told previously.

Q. Were you shy?

A. Yes. In those days girls never had a chance to converse with the opposite sex.

Q. Did you get homesick?

A. Yes. I went back to Japan.

Q. When was that?

A. About a year after I came to the States.

Q. How long did you stay in Japan?

A. About two years.



Q. When did you come back to the States again?

A. In 1924, when the immigration law came in to effect. The people who had immigrated before were exempted from the immigration law which forbid Japanese immigrants to enter the States. Ambassador Hagiwara tried to negotiate the matter. I had a child then. I wanted to raise her in Japan. I had seen the many children over here that were not like Japanese children nor Americans. I mean way they talked and acted. I didn't like that. Perhaps I was more sensitive to the matter since I was a school-teacher. I didn't want to bring my child up that way. That was the main reason that I went back to Japan with my child, but when my child started to understand things it did not work out too well. For example, when my brother came back from Tokyo, it was the time of the earthquake that I mentioned before, my child called him 'My dad'. She started to call every man 'Daddy'. I realized then the child must have a father and besides the immigration law had come into effect. I decided to join my husband. My husband planned that as soon as he had saved enough money that we would go back to Japan.

Q. Have you ever held a job?

A. No.

Q. None at all?

A. No, almost none. The second time I was here we moved to Sacramento. There was an ice co. at 4th and R St., my husband got a job there. When I went back to Japan my mother was very upset with me. She said "How come you have never learned how to sew Western style clothes while you were in America and why did you come home so soon? The neighbors came and asked me "Please sew Western style dresses for me". I told them



that I don't know how. They refused to believe me. My husband bought me a nice sewing machine and I took it back to Japan with me but I didn't know how to sew. My mother was very unhappy with me. I decided to learn how to sew after I started living in Sacramento. There was a sewing school at 4th and N., I think. I took lessons but I didn't do it for a business. When my child started going to school I made dresses for her. One day she came home and said to me, "The teacher asked me 'Who made the dress that you are wearing? It is so pretty.' I said that my mother made the dress and the teacher said 'Would you ask your mother if she would sew for me?' That was the way I started to sew for someone else. I was asked to work at the cannery but I never did. The sewing was just for making my pin money. I was very slow at it. My mother used to scold me for that. She was very quick in everything. I made the money for my kids allowances though.

Q. When did you start sewing for someone else?

A. I came to Sacramento in 1924, and went to the school. I think I started it around 1931. Masako, my daughter was in 3rd grade.

Q. How long did you go to the sewing school? Three years?

A. No, a little over one year. I could have finished the school in one year if I went regularly, but there were times I didn't go.

Q. Was the school run by a Caucasian?

A. No. It was run by a Japanese.

Q. How much did you have to pay for the lessons?

A. At first \$3.00 or \$5.00 a month. Maybe I paid \$3.00 at the beginning and later \$5.00.

Q. This is perhaps too personal, but can I ask you how much your husband



was making a month when you came to the States?

A. At the time when he worked for the railroad, I don't remember exactly. It was very little. When I came back from Japan he was making \$125.00 a month. People were saying that it was a good wage for a Japanese. Once he was earning \$140.00 but near the time we entered the camp it went down to \$105.00. Other Japanese were getting much less. It was hard labor though. He worked in the ice co..

Q. You mean the railroad and cannery didn't pay as much as the ice co?

A. I believe so. I'll ask him about it. He said he worked on the railroad and the saw mills too.

Q. Did you buy a house?

A. No, we couldn't. It was against the law and we didn't have enough money, perhaps we could have purchased a house in our children's name though.

Q. Have you ever rented land? Oh, yes, your husband never worked as a farmer did he?

A. No, he didn't.

Q. What type of work did he do after that?

A. He worked at the ice co., till we had to go to the camp. After the camp we went to Chicago. He worked at the Hotel Hilton.

Q. As a waiter?

A. No, he worked in the kitchen as a busboy. He worked at the Hotel Sherman also. Right after we got out from the camp he worked at Candy.

Q. Did you belong to any Japanese organization?

A. I belonged to the Japanese prefecture group.

Q. Have you belonged to any church?



A. My children went but I didn't go to any church. Only four or five years prior to entering the camp I attended the women's association in the church.

Q. What was the reason that you have started going to church?

A. I knew the sister of Kikugi, who was on board the ship at the same time I was. She was coming back after staying with her grandmother in Japan. She told me that her mother had said that since you are living in the States you should do what they do, like becoming a Christian. She asked me if I and the children would like to go to her church. My husband was Nichiren sect. I asked him what I should do I was thinking about becoming a Christian. He said "There is no Nichiren sect temple in this town. I don't care what church you go to since there is no Nichiren temple". Myself I did not agree with Nichiren's teaching. I thought that Buddhism and religions in general contained too much superstition. I let my children attend the Sunday school, but I didn't go to any church. I remember that when I was in college I had an assignment. I had to write about religions. My title was "I was Born to the House of Buddhism Although I have not yet Reached Understanding or Belonging". The teacher looked at me inquisively and said "Don't you think that there is a superior being"? I couldn't say yes. Partly because I wrote the essay. We all went to the Christmas programs in the church. Soon after I got to the States while my husband was working on the railroad, I subscribed to a magazine Fujin Koron. (Forum for Woman). In Japan I had subscribed to a magazine Chuo Koron. (Public Forum). After I married I changed to Fujin Koron. There was a man from Seattle that we knew. He informed me "There are very good articles in Fujin-no-Tomo."



(Friend of Woman). My wife enjoys reading them. Especially Mrs. Hani's essays are excellent". I started subscribing to Fujin-no-Tomo. Mrs. Hani's essays made me think very deeply about the Christian religion. I am taking lessons at the church now, but the person who made me believing Christianity was Mrs. Hani, who wrote the articles in the magazine every month. I was very much moved when I read her article "You Can Not Change the Color of Single Strand of Hair on Your Head". I gave thought to becoming a Christian. I knew that sometimes Christians were criticized more than non-believers. Besides I didn't think that I could do all of the things that the Bible told me to do. I gave serious thought once being baptized but somehow I didn't. It was the time I lived in Chicago. My friend noticed that I didn't want to go to church when they had communion. I was receiving communion before I didn't know that I should not. One day when I went to the church in Chicago there was a notice that if you have not yet been baptized please do not receive communion. Everyone was receiving communion. I felt very small, but I decided that I wasn't ready to receive God, and that I could fool <sup>not</sup> God. I told the friend that I did not want to go to church when they had communion. She asked why I did not get baptism? I replied that I could not possibly do what the Bible told me to do but I would receive baptism before I die. The friend said that I was too honest for my own good. One more reason that I delayed being baptized it was when the war broke out and my husband said to me "How about us being baptized"? was that prior to that I had read in a book "Testimonies are privileges of Christians". To me religion was my personal thing. To me testimony was more like hypocrisy. I didn't care to do that in front of people. I have changed my mind



since then, but for a long time I thought that I would be less tormented when I did the things which the Bible forbid if I was not a Christian. I didn't receive baptism for a long time. In 1960 I had to undergo a surgery I had given thought of dying. I thought that I would like to be baptized. Even before 1960 when Mrs. Riygo received her baptism, my husband asked me then "How about you too". I wasn't quite ready then. Earlier Rev. Kato had asked me about being baptized. I replied "I'll do it when I get back to Japan". I told him that I was getting ready for death. He said "You mean getting ready for living". I did not die afterall and I'm glad that I was baptized then. I guess that the minister was right. When my children were little they all went to church but I did not.

Q. Am I correct? You have three children, two daughters and a son.

A. You are correct.

Q. Who took your children to church at first?

A. Mrs. Riyugo. She is living in San Jose at present. She took them to the Japanese language Christian church. The Sunday school teacher, she was the church pianist also took them. Mrs. Key and Mrs. Maeda went to church with my children until Masako entered San Jose State College. My child said "I didn't understand what Rev. Nakamura was saying, but while I was playing piano at the church I began to understand what he was saying. I could read some in Japanese but the sermon was hard to understand at first although I am going to a Japanese language school".

Q. Have you had hobbies of some kind?

A. No I haven't.



Q. What were the things that you loved to do?

A. I went to the picnics with the children sometimes. Looking back, I wish that I had some hobbies. Mrs. Sato invited me to compose some poems, I thought that I would but somehow I didn't do it. Sometimes it makes me sad that I spent seventy years without any hobby nor anything that I really love to do.

Q. What was the hardest thing for you in raising the children?

A. I didn't encounter much hardship that I recall. I only had three children.

Q. How about the things you enjoyed most?

A. Perhaps watching the children grow. The boy and girls were different. The boy was stubborn. I subscribed to a Japanese children's magazine, Kodomo-no-Tomo. (Friend of the Children). In it there was a story of the good child. When I mentioned it to my daughters they tried to behave, but my son said "I don't have to be the good kid in the magazine. I am what I am".

Q. Did your children go to the Japanese language school?

A. Yes, I had started teaching them at my home after Yukio was born. Mr. Inoue, now living in Phila. was instructing in the Japanese language at his home at 3rd and W. We lived near by, 4th and T., so my children started going to Mr. Inoue.

Q. Did they go to a special public school? I mean just for the Japanese?

A. No, they did not.

Q. Do you remember the depression?

A. Yes, my husband always held a regular job and got paid. I heard



that there were many people that had it very hard. I heard that some people lost all the money they had in the bank. My husband somehow managed to work through the depression.

Q. When did you decide to settle in the U.S.?

A. The second time that I came here. I wanted to go back to Japan the first time that I was here, but when I went back to Japan I realized the good parts of America. The second time I was here I decided to stay here. I thought of sending our children to school in Japan, but I decided against it. They were better off staying with us I thought.

Q. I'll ask you about the outbreak of World War II. Are you getting tired?

A. No, I am allright.

Q. Do you remember the attitude of the Caucasians towards you at the beginning of the war?

A. It happened on Sunday. We didn't know for a long time. One of my daughters went to the junior college that day. On her way back home she stopped at friend's house and she told her. She came home and told us. It was evening already. I would imagine that there were extra news in the Japanese community, but I didn't know till my daughter informed me. It was such a shock. Ever since then I thought that the Americans were looking at us differently than before. There were police cars patrolling the Japanese community all of the time. I thought that the Americans were hostile toward us, but the people I knew before were different. They told us that "We do not think that you have anything to do with the war". The neighbors were nice to us too. I think that I was on the defensive. The things looked different than before to me.



Q. What was in your mind?

A. I wondered why the Japanese ever attacked Pearl Harbor.

Q. Was it a surprise?

A. Yes, it was. Although it happened so many years ago that what I felt is hazy now. I remember that when I was in the camp there was a chance to write a composition, I wrote that I'll never forget this feeling, but I've forgotten somehow.

Q. When did you receive the evacuation order?

A. It was when Masako was going to San Jose State College. Prior to that there was an order limiting how far we could travel. My daughter took care of all of the paper work. I felt like I had become a pauper. I misunderstood about the things that I could carry with me, too. I thought that I could bring only the things that I could carry in both my hands, actually I could have taken more baggage than I thought. I felt miserable, especially when I saw the posters on the street poles saying 'Japanese must evacuate'.

Q. How did you leave from here?

A. We gathered in one place and from there we rode a bus.

Q. Where did you go?

A. Walerga, in North Sacramento. From there we went to Tule Lake. The people who lived in the Los Angeles area were sent to Manzanar. The people around this area and the Bay area all went to Tule Lake. When I got there the people from the Portland area were there too.

Q. What did you do with your personal belongings.

A. We didn't have very much. We sold most of the furniture. The piano instructor kept our piano for us and some things that we wanted to



keep. She stored them in her basement for us.

Q. Did you go with your children?

A. Let me see, Masako was going to San Jose College, Helen, my second daughter was going to the city junior college and Masao, the youngest son, was in the 4th grade.

Q. What were the things you remember about the actions of the caucasians at that time?

A. I remember that the people came around and asked us to "Give me the things you don't need. Someone told me that you have pretty dishes. Could you give these?" Things like that.

Q. Did they say "Give me", rather than "Like to buy."?

A. They said "Give us." and "You can not take a short-wave radio, if you have one give it to us." but the people we knew before were kind.

Q. You mean the strangers were not nice to you?

A. You are right.

Q. Now I'll ask you about the life in the camp. How did you feel when you went in?

A. It is hard to express. I felt very sad.

Q. Miserable?

A. Yes, I felt miserable. Especially when waiting in a long line to get fed.

Q. Were ther any fights or arguments?

A. No, there weren't many.

Q. Did you get used to waiting in the line to get the food?

A. Yes, I did. Tule Lake wasn't bad, not like Walerga. Walerga was just a temporary camp so the waiting line was long. We had to stand and



wait at the outside of the building.

Q. What else do you remember about the camp?

A. There was no work and we were getting free food. There were numbers of classes available, flower arrangement, languages, sewing, etc., True it wasn't nice to live like a captive although we had opportunities to learn and enjoy which I did not expect in the camp. I heard someone say "We get fed without a bit of work. What a nice vacation". For most of us it was hard mentally, hard to stay inside of barbed wire, but physically it was not hardship. There were some women who had to work in the kitchen but after the chores were over they could take lessons or take up a hobby if they wished.

Q. What were some of the things that happened while you were in the camp?

A. Some things happened after we left Tule Lake. We stayed at Tule Lake just about one year. I remember that there was a decision that we had to make. We had to choose which country to pledge. I decided a long time ago even before we got in to the camp to make loyalty oath to America since we were living in this country. In the camp there were some pro-Americans and some pro-Japanese, the pro-Japanese were saying that as soon as the Japanese military invaded the Western shore, they were going to join them. Some of them said that they had hidden Japanese flags with them. I had signed the paper that I would be loyal to the States. I decided that I would keep the promise, it meant that I would be isolated from the others perhaps. Some said to me "You can change your mind since you were under pressure when you signed." I decided not to change my mind. There were a lot of people who would



have liked to join the Japanese army in those days.

Q. Did those pro-Japanese threaten you in any way?

A. Yes, I heard that someone would harm us, but it was just a rumor.

There was an American born man who tried to say "Yamato damashii" (Soul of Japan). He had forgotten how to say it. He kept saying "Yamato dama".

We signed the loyalty oath again in the camp. There was a petition passed among us that time too. It stated that Japanese nationals who were in the service were being discriminated against. They were born here and fighting for America. We asked the government to treat them equally with other Americans. It was the second petition. The first one was not good enough. I did not sign the second one, because the reply to the first petition which came from Washington D.C., stated

"If you really care for the country, you should not care for your own sake". Since I had read the reply I didn't want to sign the second petition. Some people asked me why I didn't sign the second petition? I had children too. I came to think that not only Japanese love their own

country. It was about the same time that we had the meeting for the petition. I received a letter from my daughter, Masako, who was a student at the University of Minnesota. I sent a letter to her about my decision not to sign the petition. I was thinking that she was having an unpleasant time at the school too. She wrote back "If Mother and Father would like to go back to Japan please do so. I'll stay here even if that means that maybe I will become a P.O.W. of the Japanese army". I

was deeply impressed that not only the Japanese taught their children how to love their own country. The Americans school educated their children to love their country also. They did their share. I had long thought



that only Japanese have Yamato damashii (Soul of Japan). I realized that I was wrong. I realized that very deeply when I received the letter from my daughter telling me how she cared for America.

Q. The letter, you said came from Washington D.C.. Could you tell me more about it?

A. It was a reply to the first petition, asking equal treatment for American soldiers of Japanese descent. First one was didn't do any good, so the people in the camp got together and wanted to send the second one. I've told you that I did not sign. The main reason was that I had read the reply from Washington D.C.. Someone said to me that perhaps the letter was written by a Japanese. It may be, but I thought that Americans love for America was no different from ours.

Q. How about the loyalty oath?

A. I had decided to pledge to the U.S. and had no thought of changing my mind.

Q. How did you feel when you heard that the U.S. government was drafting Nisei?

A. It wasn't a draft. The Nisei actually volunteered for it. When I heard it at first, I didn't understand why they did such a thing, but I later realized that it was a good thing. They must have gave it a lot of thought when they did. For a little while when I heard of the matter I thought that the U.S. government's action was rather egotistical. Taking Japanese Americans for soldiers while we were inside of barbed wire. Later I appreciated the action of those Nisei.

Q. What did you learn while you were in the camp?

A. I studied flower arrangement. I had learned some back in Japan



but it was different from what I learnt in the camp. I can't say that I've mastered any of it. After I arrived in Topaz, I didn't study any.

Q. Did you go to Topaz then?

A. Yes.

Q. How about the church activities?

A. After I entered the camp there was not much to do. I attended the church in Sacramento. At Topaz I met Noda, who lives in Denver now.

Q. What was your opinion about the education of the children in the camp? Yours were grown up going to college I remember.

A. Only Yukio was going to the elementary school.

Q. Did you worry about the education that Yukio was receiving?

A. One of my daughters wrote me a letter wondering if he was getting a good education in the desert. She wanted me to send him to Chicago where she was then. I consulted him about the matter but he said "I think I'm better off here than in Chicago. I don't think that the people in Chicago will like me since I am a Jap". I guess he heard someone talk about that in the camp.

Q. Did you have many meaningful experiences while you were in the camp?

A. Not much. I remember that the oldest daughter wrote in a letter once "I had an assignment to draw a picture of desert. The teacher commented that mine was the best." I suppose that the life in the desert which was very uninteresting did some good.

Q. That was when she was in college?

A. Yes, after school she taught school in the camp.

Q. Did your life in the camp change your religious belief?

A. Perhaps it gave me the chance to think more about it. Some of the



Hymns were more meaningful to us than ever. We all sang the Hymns when we were about to leave for Topaz. Rev. Kitagawa was the minister then.

Q. When did you leave the camp?

A. In 1944, we went to Chicago and stayed there for about three years.

Q. You came back to Sacramento later?

A. Yes.

Q. What was the reason that you left Chicago?

A. We liked the familiar place and besides Chicago was just too big for us. We thought that our son had a better chance of finding a wife here too, although he is still single.

Q. What kind of job did your husband find here?

A. He worked in the country, Hop's ranch.

Q. How long did he work?

A. He worked three, four years. After that he worked at Norton Water, as a janitor.

Q. He worked there till his retirement?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you do sewing?

A. No, I didn't.

Q. Did you stay in any hotels?

A. No, when we went to Chicago we stayed at the Y.M.C.A. and when we came back to Sacramento, one of my daughters bought a house for us. She was living in Davis then. The house was occupied at the time so we stayed with my daughter until the house was available to us.

Q. Did any Caucasian churches try to help you?

A. No, none that I know of did.



Q. How about any Japanese churches?

A. I can't remember much.

Q. What were the attitudes of the Caucasians when you came back here?

A. I did not feel any hostility towards us. The people who came back earlier than us told us that it was not too good.

Q. Who found the house for you? Helen?

A. Masako did. It was a small house but we were grateful since we could live together again.

Q. What was the hardest thing for you to endure since you have come back here?

A. I haven't experienced any real hardship, at the same time I have not experienced real happiness either. My husband was never out of work. We never had much money but we never had trouble make a living. My husband never spent any money for himself. My only regret in my life is that I should have spent a more meaningful life of my own. I had a very uneventful life compared with the others.

Q. You know that there were many classic children's stories in Japan, such as Hanasaki Jijii (The Old Man and the Cherry Tree). Momo Taro (The Boy Came from the Peach) etc. Did you tell any of these stories when your children were little?

A. Yes, I think so, when they were little.

Q. What was your opinion of the stories?

A. I never gave much thought about them. Besides I didn't know any other stories for the children.

Q. Which story have you told more often than the others?

A. Perhaps Momo Taro (The Boy Came from the Peach). I don't think that



I have told these stories too often. I subscribed to "Fujin-no-Tomo" (Woman's Friend) also there were the stories by Mrs. Hani called The Book for Children. I read it to my children often. There were a lot of nice short stories for children in it. I don't think that I emphasized to my children "Don't be a loser", which many Japanese parents did with their children. Today I feel that if I had used different methods of bringing up my children perhaps they would have turned out differently and been better off, I don't know. I read Mrs. Hani's article one day and she said "When you emphasize to your children 'Don't be a loser', they think and seek only to win. They have no consideration for others. The better way is to emphasize to do your best. Eventually they will learn how to enjoy it when someone else wins. Emphasizing winning makes child's mind egotistical". I agreed with the theory and never told my children "You must win". Though my children did not grow up to be what I wanted them to be. I tried anyway.

Q. Would you like to add anything to your life story?

A. I tried to bring my children up to be a fine human beings. I'm sorry to say that I did not succeed. Perhaps I should have been more strict with them. I gave in too easily. If I had lived differently maybe my children would be different by now. Especially their attitudes about marriage. I never held a job when everybody else busy working. I don't have a particularly good life in my old age. One of my bad traits is indecisiveness.

Q. Do you think it was a good choice to come to America and live?

A. Yes, I think so. Earlier in my life I wanted to go back to Japan, then I went back and realized that I liked America better.



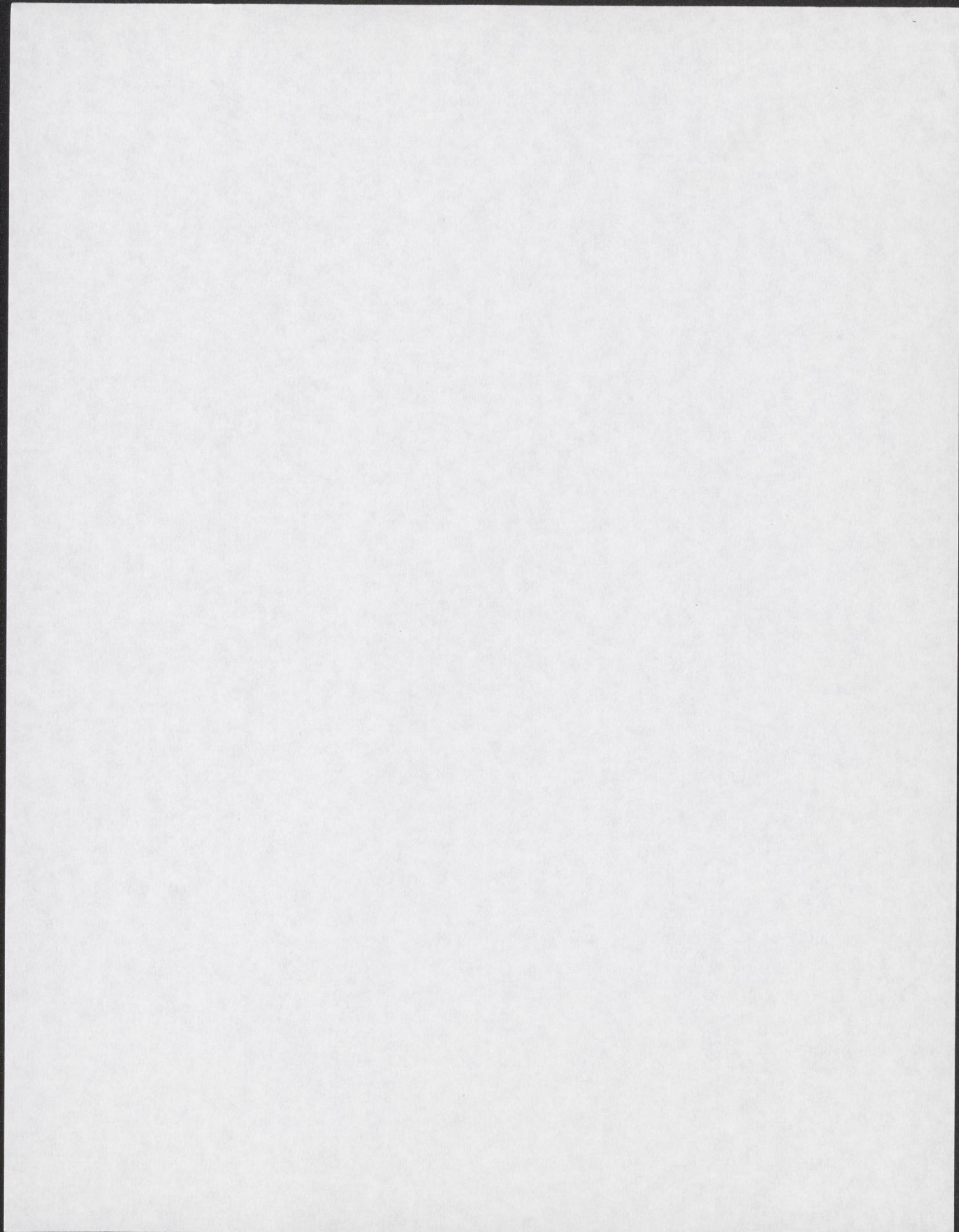
Minister. Thank you very much for your long endurance. This is the end.

Mrs. Miyake. I wasn't well prepared for the story. Perhaps I could do better if I prepared for it.

Minister. No, you did fine. Thank you.

EWD







also see solos # 22 and 10

Group # 203  
Project I.D. No. 22

NAME: Miyake, Aiko DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_ PLACE OF BIRTH: Okayama  
Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: F Marital Status: M Education: \_\_\_\_\_

PRE-WAR:

Date of arrival in U.S.: 7/1921 Age: \_\_\_\_\_ M.S. M Port of entry: Seattle  
Occupation/s: 1. Housewife/Sewing 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Place of residence: 1. Portland, Oregon 2. Japan 3. Came to Sacramento  
Religious affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_ in 1924  
Community organizations/activities: Japanese Prefecture Group

EVACUATION:

Name of assembly center: Wahgega Assembly Center  
Name of relocation center: Tule Lake, Ca & Topaz, Utah  
Dispensation of property: Sold/Piano instructor's home Names of bank/s: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jobs held in camp: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Jobs held outside of camp: \_\_\_\_\_  
Left camp to go to: Chicago, Illinois (In 1944)

POST-WAR:

Date returned to West Coast: 1947  
Address/es: 1. Chicago, Illinois (3 yrs) 2. Sacramento, California  
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Religious affiliation: Christian Church  
Activities: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of interviewer: Helen Alamo/E. Hironaka Date: Fall 1970 Place: Sacramento, Ca.

H. Takarabe  
Helen Alamo E. Hironaka  
1974



*Interview*

Conversation with Parkview Presbyterians and Issei  
Fujinkai members:

✱ Koshō Hiraga

! Sumako Itano

✱ Ai Miyake *Aiko?* ✓

! Ai Miyasaki

✱ Ai Mizobe

✓ Tome Takatsuki

✱ Toku Sato

✓ Taka Washizu

*card copy under own  
name file box 3, 4, 12, 13, 14*

Place: Parkview Presbyterian Church, Sacramento

Time: 1974

Interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe

Translator: Heihachiro Takarabe

*Interviewer's notes:*  
Somewhat difficult to follow  
as many interview people - American  
with experience with children & education.  
Concern about present generation, not worried  
the past, their views on relocation camp experience.  
Will need to check format from anti-biographical  
to views on specific subject matter. Format will need  
subject matter. So it not include to anti-biographical  
material as difficult to follow.  
Sla



/

Itano: I was raised in a very traditional and well known family in the village. You know the life of a wife in that kind of household was very difficult. I'd seen my mother suffer a lot. There are so many things which she had to worry about. So I didn't like that kind of life at all.

Washizu: Ever since I was 14 or 15 years old, I wanted to come to America, because I didn't want to live in such a poverty-stricken Japan. It's really strange, but somehow things worked out the way I wanted.

Itano: My mother used to say, "Just because you live close to parents ~~it would~~<sup>does</sup> not assure a happy life. There are lots of people who had<sup>a</sup> real hard time because of ~~it~~<sup>such a situation</sup>. So it might be better for you to marry a very straight and serious person even though he might have to go far away. It seems as if he (Mr. Itano) doesn't have much money, but he will do well<sup>enough</sup> to feed you." When I said that to my husband, he said, "You were a fool, that's why you came to ~~the~~<sup>a</sup> place like this." (laugh...)

Washizu: Well, a man who just graduated from a college wouldn't have much money. (At that time Mr. Itano just graduated from U.C. Davis in Agriculture.)



Itano: You see it turned out to be true when my mother said, "He will be able to feed you." She said, "You are very healthy, so why don't you go to America." My mother had ~~x~~ foresight because she suffered a lot in such a traditional family.

When we visited Japan last time, we didn't even tell anybody about our visit, (so that they would not make any big celebration). So my brothers were working at universities. They were really surprised to see us.

Well, I listen<sup>ed</sup> to my mother's opinion and somehow it worked out okay. However, I wasn't enthused about coming to America. My mother knew that I was a very independent woman and could not adjust in that kind of traditional household <sup>where</sup> ~~whose~~ women had to say, "Yes, Yes." and did whatever was told ~~to~~ them.

*Takashi*  
 2 (Q: Japanese-in-laws used to be very difficult to get along with.)

Washizu: I used to live in Isleton. Our children had to go to a segregated school. There was such a school in Florin, too. They say those Nisei who went to segregated schools had very heavy accents.

Q: When I went to visit Livingston, someone said that ~~once~~ a Nisei student came from Florin area and because of the school situation he couldn't speak English very well.



Washizu: Well, when my son went to a public school, a teacher held out a pair of scissors and asked his class, "What is this?" My son said, "I know. It's hasami ('scissors' in Japanese). He didn't know how to speak in English very well at that time.

(~~Sacramento~~)  
 Itano: Around here, all Nisei <sup>c</sup>children went to Lincoln Elementary school. Even though it was not a segregated school, there were many Japanese and Chinese children and very few Caucasian children. They were learning such elementary language as "Open the door," and "Close the door." It was very funny. However, they had a good teacher by the name of Miss Edna. It's her first name, I think, and I wouldn't know the rest.

Q: I heard a white person who taught Nisei children saying that when they drew pictures, they drew a large battle ship with a large Japanese flag and a small battle ship with a small American flag. (~~people~~ (laughter))

Washizu: When we entered the concentration camp, people in Sacramento wondered whether or not all the young people in Isleton were Kibei. I said, "Oh, no. My son doesn't know Japan at all." Then they said, "Why is it that everybody speaks such a good Japanese?" So I said, "Well, everybody went to a segregated school, so they know lots of words which I even don't know. However,



they were very poor in English.

Itano: You know the principal<sup>at</sup> at Lincoln Elementary school was a woman, a very strict person. If boys didn't mind themselves, the only thing <sup>the</sup> teachers had to say was, "I'm going to send you to the principal<sup>at</sup>." Then they would ~~behave themselves?~~ <sup>shrink away.</sup> Her name was Miss ~~Hatley~~ <sup>Hartley</sup>.  
(quiet down) ?

Miyake: There were many poor Japanese people at that time. Miss ~~Hatley~~ <sup>Hartley</sup> once asked Mrs. Masaki if she could get assistance ~~from~~ those poor Japanese people. But they did not want to receive any assistance from the government. Miss ~~Hatley~~ <sup>Hartley</sup> wanted Mrs. Masaki to carry this message, but they refused to accept it. No Japanese accepted welfare at that time.

Itano: At that time there was no social security, so when the husband died, <sup>the</sup> ~~these~~ family had nothing to depend on. ~~Their~~ children were still small and they were really poor. Even then, they would not accept any assistance. At that time women couldn't go to work as <sup>domestics</sup> (houseworkers) as freely as <sup>they</sup> ~~we~~ did in recent years.

Washizu: There were those who had to send their children to Japan, because otherwise they would not be able to work. Rev. Kato was sent back to Japan when he was



three years old. Especially when their mother died, <sup>the</sup> father could not take care of them.

Itano: When their father died, then the mother could raise her children somehow. But when their mother died, the father could not take care of them.

Kiyoshi and Dorothy went through similar experience because their mother ~~ed~~ died soon after Dorothy was born. She was only 2 years old then. When I went to her funeral, their family friend, Mrs. Endo (I think it was her name) held her. It was the time when she could not understand that her mother had died. She had a round cute face, and she was looking around all over the place. I think Kiyoshi knew what was going on.

Q: Mrs. Washizu, you have three children, right?

Washizu: All my children went to high school. However, Miyoko graduated from a Jr. College. My son is working for the Post Office.

Q: How about you Mrs. Itano?

My oldest one is Harvey (PHD and MD) and then Dean who is a lawyer and manager of Guild Savings and Loan. The third one, Masashi, is a pathologist in Long Beach Memorial Hospital. Sometimes I forget what my children are doing and I get embarrassed.



My daughter graduated from ~~my~~ college as a dietitian.

Q: Mrs. Sato?

Sato: All my children(three) are dentists now, because my husband was a dentist.

Q: Mrs. Miyake?

Miyake: I have three children, one boy and 2 girls.

My son is a college graduate. He wanted to become a teacher, so he went to a college in Minnesota. But he became an engineer. Helen was going to a junior college but we were evacuated, so she learned sewing in Chicago. The oldest daughter went to UC Berkeley.

Q: Mrs. Mizobe?

Mizobe: I have two daughters, Toyoko and May. Toyoko is the older one. Both went to Jr. College. Toyoko was in college when we were evacuated.

Q: Mrs. Hiraga?

Hiraga: I have 8 children. They all graduated from colleges. George went to a college in Los Angeles. He is a diplomat and now he is stationed in <sup>The</sup> Philippines. <sup>The</sup> Second one is in Los Angeles. He is a minister turned ~~a~~ social worker. He went to college in Minnesota. He went to Japan and then went to Seminary. Willie went to ~~School~~ for architects. Now he is doing <sup>work</sup> a ~~job~~ which deals with building bridges and developing land.



Shirley went to a junior college. The rest of girls went to high school. All were married.

Q: Mrs. Miyasaki?

Miyasaki: I have three daughters and a son. The oldest one, a daughter, got <sup>married</sup> ~~marry~~ early, as soon as she graduated from Jr. College. The next one graduated from high school and was sent to Japan to attend Seishin Jogakuin (Women's College). As soon as she came back, the war started. The ~~third~~ one was attending a Jr. College when the war started. So she didn't get to graduate, but she went back to college after they got married. My husband died when Dan, my son, was in college, <sup>with</sup> ~~one~~ more year <sup>until his</sup> ~~to~~ graduation. He was attending a dental college in Chicago.

Q: Mrs. Takatsuki, you don't have any children, right?

Takatsuki: Yes, that's right.

Hiraga: I guess I have the most children. My children liked school, so they all wanted to go to school.

Q: They told me that Nisei did very well in school, why?

Itano: You see, we had <sup>no way</sup> ~~nothing~~ to improve ourselves, because of discrimination, however, there was one thing we could do which was to send our children to school. You know that they had to be a lot better than white people (to get a job). If they were equal, then Nisei would have no chance. However, I didn't have to tell my children to study. I did tell them to study Japanese, though.



Q: How about other people?

Takatsuki: This is the way I feel. Nisei <sup>are</sup> ~~were~~ Americans. Their mothers stayed home. However, nowadays both parents work and <sup>the</sup> ~~were~~ children <sup>are</sup> left alone at home. So this might have something to do with their grades being lower than those of Nisei. I also think that children (Japanese-Americans) now are used to too much ~~of~~ luxury. Issei were very poor.

Itano: Friends are also an important factor, too. If they had good friends, then it was OK. Japanese lived in a small area, so everybody knew what <sup>the</sup> children were doing. Even school teachers knew <sup>the</sup> children's parents, so ...

Takatsuki: That's right. They didn't have too many white children as their friends.

Q: Why Nisei <sup>did the study</sup> ~~studied~~ hard?

Itano: Of course parents encouraged them very much. I think parents wanted them to become better educated and more recognized by the society than Issei were. I think this was the real wish which was <sup>in the</sup> ~~behind~~ parents mind.

Washizu: You see, Issei came to <sup>America</sup> ~~the place~~ where they could not speak the language and had no rights. We ~~even~~ could not buy land, because we did not have citizenship. Issei knew that they couldn't advance very far, but they really wished that at least their children <sup>could</sup> ~~can~~ become successful.



Itano: However, even if some of the Nisei graduated from Engineering school, they could not get jobs <sup>in those days.</sup> I knew there were those who said, "What are you talking about! Even if you graduated from college, you can't even get a job. There is no use going to school!" There were some people like that. Besides, if their kids worked at a farm, or a fruit stand, they could make money immediately. Take Imagawa, for instance, even though their children graduated from college, they couldn't get jobs. But they still sent their children to school. They were really interested in education.

Washizu: There was a time like that. If they thought about immediate income, going to school was a waste of time. For example, I knew a Nisei who graduated from Harvard University, but the only job he could get was a job as a delivery boy at that time.

Itano: In one way of looking at it, because of the war, Japanese Americans were forced to relocate and expose <sup>become</sup> (to many more areas of America. That's why people in the East began to recognize <sup>the</sup> Nisei's ability.

Miyake: It's very important to do well in school, but I have never told my children "not to get behind others". I have been reading "Fujino Tomo" ("Friends of Housewives", a magazine for housewives) for a long time. There were many good articles in there. Some of them, particularly those <sup>articles</sup> of Hani, Motoko's ~~articles~~, were good. She often quoted from the Bible. Once, she was asked by an interviewer where she got the idea about her school. She replied,



"I got a hint from the Bible." She said, "You should ~~never~~ teach children not to <sup>be</sup> ~~get~~ defeated. It's OK when they win. But if he/she ~~get~~ defeated, then <sup>The child</sup> your children will bear a grudge against others. I would like to say, 'Do your best!' If you do well, then you'll be very happy. Even if you <sup>don't</sup> ~~didn't~~ do well, you can accept yourself. At the same time you can <sup>with</sup> sympathize others who <sup>don't</sup> ~~didn't~~ do well. You should never insist on winning. Otherwise you would not be able to be kind to others."

Itano: However, Japanese parents said, "Don't get defeated!" quite often. I used to hear it very often. They would say, "Makeruna!" (don't get defeated)."

Washizu: However, soldiers of 442 <sup>nd</sup> ~~nd~~ must have put up <sup>a</sup> maximum effort because they heard "Makeruna!" from their parents."

Miyake: However, I feel that this comes from <sup>The</sup> Nisei's patriotic spirit for America."

Itano: It's true. It's not just Japanese who loved their own country. Nisei <sup>didn't</sup> ~~don't~~ say that by <sup>words</sup> words, but they sure cooperated with the government and showed their patriotism by action. I think Nisei are very honest."

Miyake: I <sup>feel</sup> ~~felt~~ the same way. It's not just Japanese who taught patriotic spirit. Americans also taught their children the spirit to love their country. I was still at Tule Lake, and Masako was in Minnesota when we had to decide whether or not



we should go back to Japan." So we wrote to her about it. Then she said, "Mother, if you want to go back to Japan, you <sup>can</sup> ~~could~~ do that anytime you want." However, even if I'm alone, I would like to stay here and serve America."

This was her letter to us. For the first time I felt that American children were indeed taught the spirit of patriotism little by little in the schools. It comes from the fact that they sing national anthems, and <sup>from</sup> ~~doing~~ other things at school. It is a very gradual process. It's not because she went to the East, but because she attended ~~Americans~~ <sup>American</sup> school. That's how I feel."

Q: Mrs. Sato, how did you educate your children?

Sato: Well, you know I didn't understand anything, so I just let them do whatever they wanted to do."

Itano: At Sato's <sup>The children</sup> ~~young people~~ had to do better than their father, since he was an Issei dentist."

Sato: I feel they had good friends."

Miyasaki: At that time <sup>The</sup> ~~time~~ environment was very good."

Q: Your children's friends were <sup>Masaki (American)</sup> ~~whites~~?

Sato: No, they were Japanese, <sup>the</sup> Masaki's boys, Dr. Sato and others."

I really feel it was because of their friends' influence that <sup>they</sup> turned out OK."



Itano: I received a Christmas card once from Mr. Nagaishi, a former Japanese school teacher. He said, "I'm sorry I haven't been able to communicate with you for a long time. One of the reasons why I couldn't write to you was because I feel that I had not been successful in teaching Japanese to your sons. I tried my best but I was not very successful. So I have been feeling very small." Well, I cried, because it wasn't his fault. (He took care of my son, Harvey.) It was because my boys were lazy and didn't study hard enough.

I told them that if they could get good grades at the <sup>Public</sup> ~~Whiteman's~~ school, then there was no reason why they couldn't do well in Japanese school. They just didn't want to put in <sup>the</sup> an effort. I used to be scolded by my husband, because boys weren't studying Japanese hard enough. My husband used to say, "You are staying at home <sup>the</sup> and why don't you help <sup>the</sup> them to study Japanese." This used to give me a headache.

I suppose when they went to Japanese school, they relaxed and didn't study. If the teacher was real strict teacher, then the students would learn ~~it~~, but...

They say that Mrs. Makita was a real strict teacher. Even the boys minded their manners and studied hard in her class. If a teacher was <sup>benign</sup> lenient, <sup>the</sup> boys were very noisy, <sup>tapping</sup> on the desk, and <sup>doing</sup> did all kinds of things in class.

Q: Mrs. Mizobe, why did Nisei do so well in school?



Mizobe: I suppose it's because they were diligent. They were Americans, so they had to be educated well here. I wouldn't know <sup>the</sup> other reasons. If you study hard, then it ~~would~~ become your own treasure.

Q: Did you think Nisei knew that?

Mizobe: I think so. You see their parents didn't understand too much about ~~things~~ of America. It was very inconvenient. So <sup>The children</sup> ~~they~~ just couldn't afford to be indifferent <sup>about</sup> ~~for~~ studying.

Itano: One day a Nisei parent asked me how we helped our children to study, because her children (<sup>Sensei</sup> Nisei) weren't studying very much. I told her that I never had to tell them to study, but it was very important to create an atmosphere where children could study hard. All my brothers went to college in Japan and there aren't any who stopped at the middle school. So I used to tell my children about them. I suppose there <sup>was</sup> ~~were~~ <sup>an</sup> such atmosphere at my home. We never told them ~~They had to get a job right away~~ <sup>to work as fast as they can</sup>. There were those who quit school and started working. You couldn't blame them because Issei didn't have much economic power to send their kids to school one after another.

Takatsuki: I think kids who came from rich family <sup>ies</sup> ~~ies~~ didn't do very well. It's the kids who came from <sup>a</sup> rather poor family who tried their best. You see, they knew the situation at home. They couldn't fool around. The other thing <sup>is</sup> is that, before the war when children finished <sup>classes at</sup> their public school, they used to go to a Japanese school. They just didn't have a chance to play. As soon as they ate their sweets after school, they had to go to their Japanese school. So they didn't have time to get involved with bad ~~the~~ children's groups.



Itano: Well, they didn't even let <sup>our children</sup> ~~you~~ <sup>them</sup> in. *The groups.*

Takatsuki: Nowadays Nisei are scattered in the ~~white~~ community and they don't live in the same area together. So Sansei children associate with ~~white~~ <sup>other</sup> children in their neighborhoods. You don't know whether those children are good or bad. And most of the time ~~these white~~ <sup>The</sup> parents don't know where their kids are. Once a Japanese parent called her neighbor trying to find her children's whereabouts. The neighbor said, "Well, they'll come back when the time comes. You don't need to watch them that carefully." Nisei still worry about their children's whereabouts. But because they associate with anybody nowadays, Sansei children are <sup>apt</sup> ~~easy~~ to get involved with bad groups. *anyway.*

Others: You are right!!

Miyasaki: When our children <sup>were</sup> ~~are~~ growing up, they studied hard. That's all they did. So when they came back from Japanese school, they ate some sweets and then they studied again. All Japanese children did the same. So naturally they learned to study hard.

Itano: They didn't have that much freedom. So it was better for them.

Q: Did you send your children through school?

Itano: Yes, we did.

Sato: Yes, we did.

Miyake: No, we didn't. My children worked during summer vacation



and also worked when they could. So I didn't have to send any money to them.

Miyasaki: Well, ~~as for Dan~~ <sup>He</sup> worked during summer and saved up about 4 to 5 thousand dollars. However, it wasn't enough for his expenses, especially for the dentistry. They said they needed over \$10,000 a year. So I helped him out. It's almost impossible to go to <sup>the</sup> school of dentistry by yourself. I sold some bonds which my husband had in order to make money <sup>available to</sup> ~~for~~ him.

Itano: It was ~~a~~ real good use of that money.

Miyasaki: Yes, because of that he can make good money.

Itano: My son, Masashi, also went to work in Marysville and other places. However, <sup>his</sup> ~~their~~ earnings weren't that much. If <sup>he</sup> ~~they~~ were <sup>spent</sup> ~~to spend~~ it for tuition, <sup>it wouldn't</sup> ~~they couldn't~~ have lasted more than one semester, because <sup>he</sup> ~~they~~ had to spend a lot in the beginning.

Q: How about you, Mrs. Hiraga?

Hiraga: My eldest son attended school in Japan. We had to send money <sup>to</sup> ~~for~~ him. <sup>Some of our sons</sup> ~~There were some who~~ went to school here. So we had to spend money for them, too. Some of them worked at a cannery. Then one of them went to Los Angeles. <sup>Our</sup> ~~n~~ Girls learned sewing and other things.

Itano: I think Harvey worked in his school, too.

Q: I still have one more question. Just because you went to school, it doesn't mean that you can become a fine person, does it?



Miyake: I feel that you need both public school education and family education.

Itano: Even then, one must build that up before they graduate from high school. I don't know how successful I had been.

Q: When Japanese say, "Learning" it also <sup>includes</sup> building of one's moral character. It's not just knowing things.

Itano: I agree with that. Just because one <sup>goes</sup> ~~went~~ through school, it does not assure him <sup>to</sup> ~~to~~ become <sup>a</sup> fine person.

Takatsuki: Back in the old days, we used to learn "shushin" to learn moral codes. However, they do not teach things like that here.

Miyasaki: They don't come to church, either.

Takatsuki: If children don't go to a temple or a church, they <sup>don't</sup> ~~wouldn't~~ have a chance to learn these things.

Q: In Japan, teachers weren't just somebody who taught subject matters. They taught something about building a good character. However, teachers here don't do that.

Itano: I think teachers here are very specialized (so that they can't teach morality).

Takatsuki: In Japan, if the church <sup>were a</sup> ~~were~~ <sup>one</sup> ~~one~~ Christian, then <sup>they'd</sup> ~~they'll~~ go to church. However, if they were not, they did not have much chance



to go to a temple or shrine. So they needed to teach morality at school. When we were going to school, we learned it, but they don't teach it any more.

Q: In one way <sup>the</sup> American educational system is very inconsistent. High school students cannot smoke <sup>on</sup> the school premise. Sometimes <sup>the</sup> vice-principle <sup>all</sup> will make <sup>the</sup> a round and if he finds someone smoking, he can order him to stop smoking. However, if kids <sup>are</sup> were smoking just outside of the school, he <sup>can't</sup> couldn't say anything. ~~If it was~~ In Japan, <sup>a</sup> teacher is a teacher wherever he may be. When they say don't smoke, it <sup>carried weight</sup> carried <sup>is</sup> wherever he went. So it ~~was~~ very consistent. <sup>over there.</sup>

Washizu: I don't understand the system here either. Once our house was burglerized. It was in Isleton. So I notified the police that my house was burglerized. Well, he said, "I'm a police <sup>man</sup> for the city and I can't go out to <sup>the</sup> a county to take care of it." I thought it was <sup>strange</sup> funny.

Miyasaki: You must have been in a different district.

Itano: However, she must <sup>go</sup> gone to the closest place for ~~the~~ protection.

Washizu: I don't understand that, because we were in the same Grand Island. So I felt that he was running away from his responsibility. Even in this town, <sup>the</sup> police will come after the burglars who are running away. It's because they <sup>are</sup> were worried about their own safety.

Itano: When we were raising children, we could say whether or not ~~with certain~~ other children. Nisei were



very obedient. However, nowadays, children have too much freedom. Parents have to worry about them very much. When our children were growing up, we could tell where they were and what they were doing.

My son, Harvey, never said anything about himself and his achievements at school. Others' parents used to tell me about his activities. His friends used to tell their parents about him, and then in turn they used to tell me. They wouldn't tell me anything bad about him, though.

*Community closer*  
Takatsuki: The world was much smaller then. *3*

Miyasaki: I feel Japanese parents were respected by teachers, too.

*are*  
Takatsuki: Children's education begins when they were very small. My niece in Texas brings her two children to their Sunday School every Sunday. The younger one who is 3 now said, "Grandma, why don't you go to church? I go to church dressed up. It's very good to go to church!!" Children must be trained from childhood.

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*Cool World*  
Washizu: .....this man took 3 children and went back to Japan right after the war. He said he and his family were placed with the people who came back from Manchuria and Taiwan. When they were fed, the food looked like chicken feed. So he was looking at the food for a while. Then a refugee from Manchuria came by and said, "Oh, are you through with it? Can I take it away from



you?" and he took it away and ate it up.

One day he asked the waiters, "Would you please give us a little better food?" Then the waiter said, "I can't do anything about that. Talk to the cook!" In ~~the~~ comparison to the refugees from Manchuria and Taiwan, <sup>The</sup> American situation was much better. The WRA told us to take as much as we can carry. So some people wore 2 to 3 <sup>garments, plus as</sup> underwear, 2 pants, and 2 overcoats. On the other hand, people from Manchuria didn't have anything, they say because it was in August.

In Japan there were quite a few thieves after the war. These people slept with a big stick, ~~papa and his boy~~, so that when a thief came in, they could fight him back.

I went to visit Japan in 1949. People in this church gave me a farewell party. I felt like I was a <sup>royalty</sup> king or something. I also received a party from a Kenjin Kai (prefectural association). I met the person whom I was talking about. He told me, "Every time I see my children's face at sleep, I say to them in my heart, 'Please forgive me. I made such a bad judgment. We left a country where there <sup>was</sup> everything abundantly and came to this country where there is nothing. Please forgive me.'"

This father was really emotional about it. Because this father told his children that Japan was a very good country and that's why his children came with him. However, the situation was completely different.



Miyasaki: However, Tule Lake was very rough for a while. We had to leave for Colorado. Didn't you go with us?

Washizu: Yes, we did. However, we were in a different passenger coach. We all were together. Life is such a long journey and there are lots of things which happen. I don't know how I survived to this day. Rev. Takarabe, you should go to the Tule Lake Pilgrimage (1974). You will hear all kinds of stories. There are many people who died in the camp. They died with a great deal of regrets.

We used to call the camp (Tule Lake) haisho no chi (a land of exile). When we wrote a letter, we opened it with a line, "We have been looking at the moon for so many months/year from the land of exile."

Q: What do you mean by Haisho?

Washizu: It means that we were sent away to the land of exile.

Miyasaki: You know Sugawara, Michizane who was sent to exile.

He composed a poem from the place of exile saying, "I am looking at the moon from the land of exile." He was sent to a very lonely place, so he expressed his feeling in a poem. Well, we all experienced the same loneliness and hardship.

Washizu: Well, then the news came to us at Colorado that Japan had lost, people were beside themselves. Their faces were pale and no one said a word. All Issei were walking like they had no bones in them. Because many people thought that Japan would win. So no one dared to look at others' faces. No one said a word.



It was unconditional surrender, such a miserable state. I feel it was really great that Americans lifted the Emperor alone.

Miyasaki: It was because of the good will of Chiang Kai-Shek. He did a lot of good things for Japan. Unfortunately China was divided into two. *Delite*

Washizu: After the war, we were wondering where I should go; to the East, or Japan or to California. I thought about this every day. At that time, Rev. Nakamura extended his saving hands to us. I will never forget his kindness. He was always smiling. (After he opened a hostel at Parkview), he went to the railroad station everyday to pick up Japanese people who were coming back to Sacramento. At that time, Nisei were holding small babies. They came to our church and ate meals. Then Rev. Nakamura would help them to get settled, or help them to go to the East.

Rev. Nakamura was very helpful to Japanese community. I really feel we <sup>were</sup> ~~are~~ lucky to survive through those ordeals. There are many people who had lost their lives because of this evacuation, though.

There were many Issei who were interned. The government didn't want leaders to be around, so they put them in internment camps. There were lots of people who died there, too.

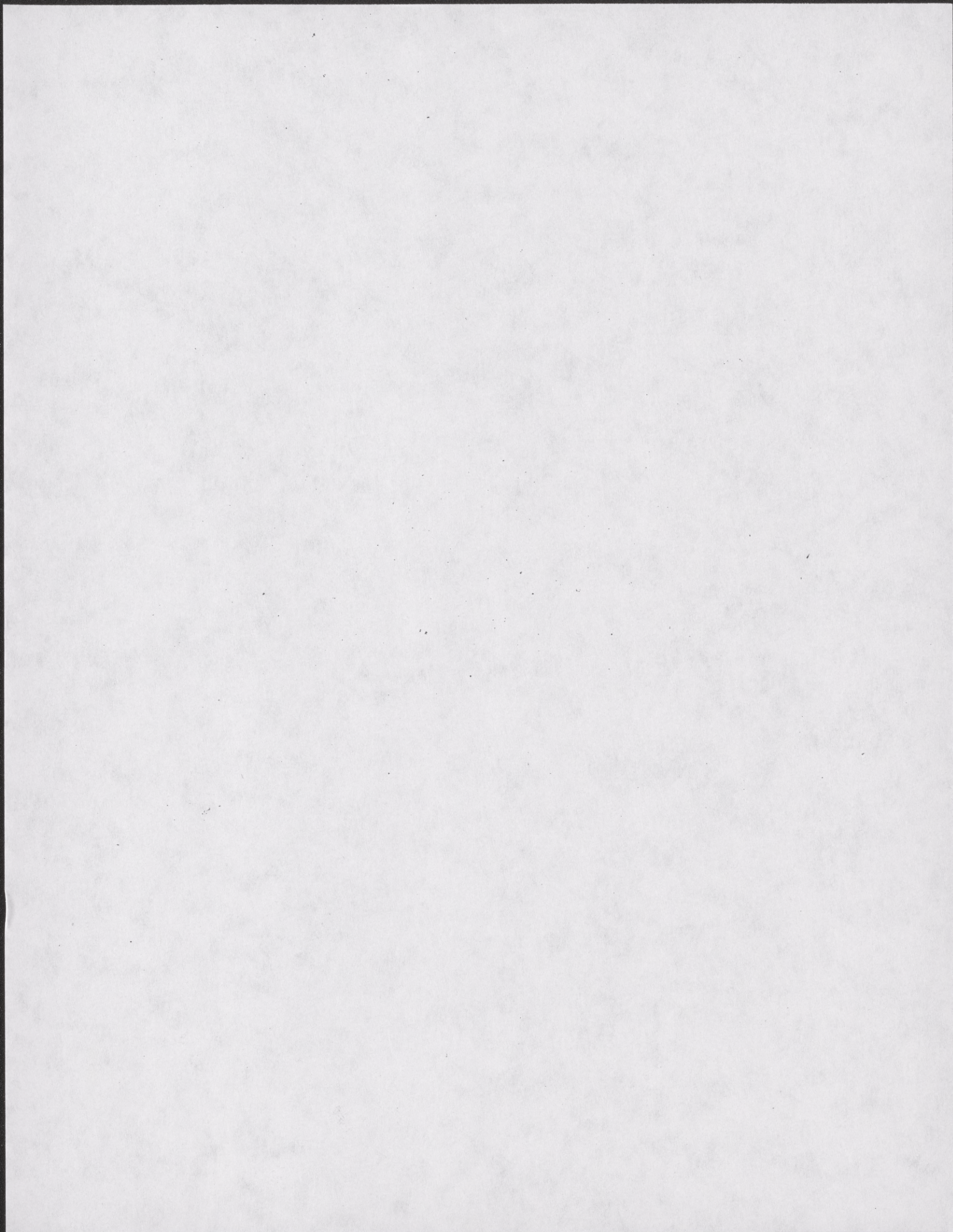
There was a man who had worked as the president of the Japanese Association in Isleton. He had a heart condition. However, <sup>the</sup> FBI



agents forced him to get ready to be <sup>incarcerated</sup> ~~incarsolated~~ .....

(The conversation ends at this point.)







also see tapes # 10 and 203

# 22 includes morimoto, seruko

Project I.D. No. 22 10

NAME: Miyake, Aiko DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_ PLACE OF BIRTH: Okayama  
Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: F Marital Status: M Education: Normal School

PRE-WAR:  
Date of arrival in U.S.: 7/1921 Age: \_\_\_\_\_ M.S. M Port of entry: Seattle  
Occupation/s: 1. Housewife/Sewing 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Place of residence: 1. Portland, Oregon 2. Went to Japan for 2 yrs. 3. Sacramento, Ca.  
Religious affiliation: None (Came back in 1924)  
Community organizations/activities: Japanese Prefecture Group & Women's Asso.

#### EVACUATION:

Name of assembly center: Walerga Assembly Center  
Name of relocation center: Tule Lake, Ca. & Topaz, Utah  
Dispensation of property: Sold/Piano Instructor's basement of bank/s: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jobs held in camp: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Jobs held outside of camp: \_\_\_\_\_  
Left camp to go to: Chicago, Illinois (In 1944)

#### POST-WAR:

Date returned to West Coast: 1947  
Address/es: 1. Chicago, Illinois (3 yrs) 2. Sacramento, California  
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Religious affiliation: Christian Church  
Activities: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe Date: 9/1970 Place: Sacramento, Ca.  
Translator: A. TOKUNO



Introview with Mrs. Teruko Morioka and Mrs. Aiko Miyake

Mrs. Morioka had passed away since then. At the time of introview she was 69 years old.

Introview took place sometime in fall, 1970.

Interviewers: Mrs. Helen Akune  
Mrs. Elaine Hironaka

Translated by Mrs. Asako Tokuno  
Completed on Sep 20, 1973.



Q: What is your name?

MRS. MORIOKA: It is Teruko Morioka. I was born in Kochi-ken, Takaohamachi, on the first day of the year 22; I was married...an arranged marriage, you know...after that, in April of the ( ) year...  
... let me see, I forget the day, but the early part of April I debarked in San Francisco...and then...

Q: Did you stop in Hawaii?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, yes, we stopped in Hawaii.

Q: How many days did it take?

MRS. MORIOKA: Let me see, it took about 16 days, I think. In those days the boats took so long....

Q: From Japan to Hawaii?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, to San Francisco. Let me see, how long did it take from Hawaii, I wonder...

MRS. MIYAKE : I didn't stop in Hawaii. I went to Seattle.

MRS. MORIOKA: Oh, I see. To Hawaii, let me see...didn't it take about nine days; anyway it ~~seemed~~ like 16 days altogether....but I was so sea-sick you see, I thought no matter what happened I'd never want to ride on a boat again, that's how sick I got!

Q: Did you look forward to coming to America?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, I wanted to come to America. I wanted to come so much! I yearned to come to America and so I did! Then, when I did come, it was so different from the way I imagined it would be when I was still in Japan. When I was about to arrive,



my husband said to me, "All the young people are saying "America, America" and look forward to coming, but there is a saying that "until you have climbed Mt. Fujii, you haven't seen anything..." so, don't be disappointed, he had warned me...and sure enough, when I got here, it was just exactly as he had said; really now, after you've been in Japan and you come over here, it was so desolate!... Our friends were few and all of us being Japanese and not understanding English, it was so difficult and you became homesick, you know... and I wondered why I had come to such a place and I was so unhappy!

Q. (Where did you settle?)

MRS. MORIOKA: Uh, Stockton, at first. We were in Stockton for about a year....and then, we went to Marysville and in Marysville, we did ( ) for two or three years, you see, and after that we came to East Sacramento and there, until the ( ), we had a grocery.

Nowadays, most of the Nisei marry for love, neh, but in our day, ours were all arranged marriages or picture-bride marriages, you see. Even persons in Japan ( ). Contact among the young people wasn't permitted; therefore, the majority of Japanese of my age-group all of them were arranged marriages. Mine was one of them, so you see, we didn't know how to make a living and really, when there's an



age difference of over ten years....you know they say..."ten years make an epoch"...there's a difference in (       ) and you don't understand the ways of life and then to come to this country and there were so many things to worry about, you know....Any way, there were times when I thought, if only there were no children, (       ); there were even times like that, and I worked so hard and I.....really! There was a time I cried and prayed to God to please keep my soul on a righteous path and then since we lived in the country where it's spacious, the children had a dog that had puppies and they were always hungry and I didn't know about dog food...I couldn't understand English, neither of us could...so, I would boil the dog's milk and put it over some rice and give it to the puppies and they loved it! Then, the puppies got big enough to waddle around and while they all gathered around the food in this big pan with soggy rice and milk, I noticed the mother dog sitting back in the corner watching her pups and wondering what they were eating and at that time I was so impressed! Ma-a- I thought, really, even a mother dog knows such love for her children and here I was, born a human being, (=       ) honestly, I was so disgusted with myself that I decided then that I must do my best for the children's sake...for the children's welfare...that's the way I thought at that time.



So, then, now this year will mark our 47th anniversary since I was married...and there have been sad times, miserable times, but really ( ) so then, we've had a relatively happy life and if it hadn't been for ( ) we might not have managed and I'm feeling grateful.

Q: How old were you when you were married?

MRS. MORIOKA: 21 years old. I was exactly 21. It was 47 years ago.

Q: ( )

MRS. MORIOKA: 21st year.... We were married on New Year's Day and then around the end of March we left Kobe and arrived in April ..6th or 7th I think it was. There was an Immigration Office we went thru' ... ( ) and that was 3 or 4 days...can't remember exactly, it's so long ago!

Q: ( )

Q: Let's begin with your name first....

MRS. MIYAKE : I'm Miyake, Aiko. In Japan, I'm from Okayama -ken, Taka-machi.

( )

In the 21st year, January 1st we were married and....

Everyone in Japan said, "Don't go to America. Wouldn't it be better to find something to do here in Japan and (

) they all said one thing or another to discourage us from coming to America. Miyake said there wasn't anything special to do that he liked in Japan and I ( )



and my husband said it would be better to go to America, so I thought I'd better come with him so I came even if I didn't really want to come to America, I didn't want to stay behind in Japan....since he insisted, so I came with him in July. When we left Yokohama it was exactly the 4th of July....fireworks were on display and my husband informed me that that was for America's Independence Day. Then, when we got to Seattle and from there we went to Portland. Then, in Portland he worked in a store; then since they needed workers on the railroad further inland in the mountains and asked us if we wouldn't come, they took us away in to the mountain country. The foreman was Japanese and since we were a married couple, they pulled along a house for us and let's see, how many years was it we stayed now?

Q: Were they all Japanese?

MRS. MIYAKE : Yes, Japanese. The cook was from Kumamoto and now and then he'd say something in the Kumamoto dialect that we couldn't understand. And, there was this "meat-house", I wondered what in the world it was...a small, let's see, 16 x 9 or 16 square or so...; it was in the hills among the trees in a grove, this little house, built to hang the meat where it was cool and it wouldn't spoil, you see. Really, the trains passing every now and then was all we ever saw....that was all there was for us Japanese and it was a very lonesome feeling. So at one point



I, just myself, longed very much to go back to Japan.  
I was concerned especially about the children not hearing  
the Japanese language, so if the children grew up in America,  
as Japanese...( ) my Japanese instincts were  
still very strong...( ).

MRS. MORIOKA: ..because there was prejudice....

MRS. MIYAKE: Not prejudice. I didn't feel or think there was any prejudice  
or experience any as such...

Q : Mrs. Miyake, did you teach the children here or start a  
Japanese School or teach any children here?

MRS. MIYAKE : No, I have never taught.

MRS. MORIOKA: Mrs. Takatsuki started a Japanese School....kindergarten...

MRS. MIYAKE: I've never taught in America. When the children were smaller  
I taught them at home, you know.

Q: Do you have children?

MRS. MIYAKE : Yes

Q: How many?

MRS. MIYAKE: Three. When the eldest was one and I was pregnant, I returned  
to Japan and then, in 1924, before a law was passed that Japanese  
could not come to America, I came back. At that time I returned.  
But then, when I was in Japan, I had planned to stay until, as  
we all dreamed in those old days, years ago, my husband made  
his fortune and would return to Japan...and to bring up the  
children at my parent's home. However, I was also thinking



how difficult it would be to bring up children without my husband. Whenever, my brother would visit, the children would climb onto his lap right away, substituting him for their father and just as I was thinking..."this is not good..", I received a letter asking if I wouldn't come back to America. So, for the children's sake...; at first, I went back to Japan thinking it was better for their welfare, but then, I decided it was more important for them to be brought up by both parents and so I came back and they started grammar school. I would receive inquiries from Japan about sending the children to school in Japan, but at that point, I was convinced it was important to bring one's children up by one's own hand and not leave the job to someone else...

Q. Was there a depression in Japan?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, when we came there wasn't that much of a depression because it was during the Taisho period. A year later there was a tragedy - ( ) in the Tokyo Kanto Area. It wasn't that much of a depression. But it wasn't anything like it is now...it seems their economy is really booming!

Q: ( )

MRS. MORIOKA: No, it wasn't for that reason. It's because when the young people in Japan hear about America, they get carried away!.. They hear about all the dollars and they think that's the place to go..America..where everybody is rich, the Japanese



are thinking. Therefore, when we go back to Japan and take you know, just a small gift...they seem to think..."what kind of gift is that to bring back from America"...our relatives are thinking..."Is that all they brought?" So, America is the hope of all the young people where all the wealth is so they want to come so badly with all their hopes and dreams. And then when they get here and it's not really the way they thought it would be. Now, the Nisei are really well-off, to my way of thinking...; they have a beautiful education and the Issei.. well, among us that is to say, there were some who were pretty well educated, but for the most part, they had to immigrate and with little education and ended up in the country doing farm or domestic work...there was no choice for them, neh. Therefore, the Nisei grew up (in an orderly manner) because they grew up in the country where it was spacious and there was no chance to get into trouble and the parents had many hardships working hard and the children had the conscience to feel they should help out even if a little, so they felt a (        ), so they didn't get bad....that's the way I feel anyway. The Sansai, now, are getting too much attention (getting spoiled) in my opinion. The parents are well-educated, they live in a beautiful home, they're given everything they want...because of this their standard of living is too ( selfish ).



The Issei that have the education of the Nisei are very few. Everybody went to grammar school. The men went as far as what they call a common school (Jinryo Gakko) in our day...similar to the Junior High Schools here, I guess it's called....that's as far as they were able to go...like my husband. That is the way it was, and the women were better educated than the men sometimes....the wives, that is...so that caused some friction, but for the sake of the children, the Issei women, 90% of them....the Issei who became mothers thought of the well-being of their children, that they should become successful, outstanding citizens - that was foremost in all their minds.

Q: Were all of the passengers on the boats from Japan, Japanese?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, mostly Japanese....About the time we came, picture-bride marriages had been outlawed, so they had to go fetch the wives so there were scads of couples on board coming here together!

(Laughter)

Q: So, when you disembarked at San Francisco, did all of you who came together go together to one place? Or did you separate?

MRS. MORIOKA: Once we got to San Francisco, we all disbanded and went where our husbands ( ) and dispersed to Fresno or Stockton... or wherever....

Q: Were there communities of Japanese-like in Fresno or Stockton?  
Is that where you went?



MRS. MORIOKA: Oh, yes, indeed...there were gatherings of Japanese; not like it is today. Like Marysville, for instance, Stockton, and Sacramento...(kaji-en) flourished, and there were a great number of Japanese laborers and....

Q: But it was lonesome even if you were here together, you missed Japan I suppose?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes.....

Q: Was there some interesting or funny experience that you can remember...because of the difference in the American and Japanese cultures? Do you have any recollection?

MRS. MORIOKA: Let me see....

Q: Did you wear Japanese clothes? Did you come here in Japanese dress?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, we came in kimonos. But once we got here we couldn't wear kimonos; after all, we couldn't wear foreign clothes and were careful not to wear kimonos and wore dresses and suits and not Japanese clothing. So you know, my feet hurt so much (laughter). When we were going to school, even to jyogakko, they wear shoes now...but we wore wooden clogs (geta) and in our prefecture, the boys wore shoes to Normal School, but for everyday, for sewing school, we wore ordinary red-thonged geta with our uniforms, so we'd never worn shoes! So then, they were those pointed-toed shoes and my feet hurt and hurt (laughter) and I couldn't go anywhere! I couldn't even walk....that was one of my biggest



problems! (laughter)

Q: How about the beds?

MRS. MORIOKA: What, bed? Oh, I liked the beds. They felt comfortable.... they felt good. My aching feet were my downfall (laughter) I couldn't walk. In a geta or slippers, your feet could spread out, but in shoes, my poor toes were squeezed together and they hurt! (Laughter)

Q: Miyake-san, can you recall something?

MRS. MIYAKE : So-desu-ne....the second time I came, we came to Sacramento. At that time, the landlord lived upstairs and he was Portugese. And so to converse...(laughter)...in my broken English....we couldn't communicate. 'Yes' and 'No' are opposite in meaning you see. When he'd ask, "Is this yours? " (Does this belong to you?) and since it wasn't mine, I'd say, "Ee-yeh, is it yours?" (

).

MRS. MORIOKA: That you know is often mistaken. In Japanese, we say "hai, (yes), that is so" to everything. And so, therefore, in this country, if one should ask "Is so and so at home?" You're supposed to say, "no". In Japanese, "yes, that is so," is what we'd answer....and so with that in mind, we say "yes". (Laughter)....and then, they'll say "Wassamatta? you just said they're not at home" and then you say "yes" again they'd



complain. At times like that we couldn't understand and we'd have a misunderstanding (laughter). In that respect, there was a difference.

Q: Hakujin, did they treat you well when you first came?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, they were very good to us. After all, Americans, how do you say, lived in a spacious country and they were big-hearted, so we were thankful, as compared to Japanese who were limited to small islands and their thinking was small. (Shima-gōri-konjō) When they get ahead a little they tend to be boastful (countries have a national trait, you know...) and Americans living in a spacious land, as a whole, they tend to think big, so I was impressed.

Q: Before you came from Japan, did you have work first or did you find work after you got here?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, my husband was continuously in farm work you see.

Q: And did he come here because of that or did he come because they offered him work?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, that wasn't the way it was....that is, if you have a farm, one has to help out with the work. So he had work..and you couldn't do all the farm work alone. There were Filipino and Mexican hired-hands to cook for and feed; care of the children; there were no machines like today. We had to use wash-tubs and scrub-boards and we really worked! Ironed, too and then, when there was spare time, we'd pull weeds to help out even a



little on the ranch as it cost so much to hire workers. And then, in 1929 to 1930, during Hoover's administration (he's famous for the depression period)...the depression came along and we really suffered during that time. I don't know about the city people...but on the ranch, the produce we raised wouldn't sell, nothing would. We hired workers, paid out money, bought fertilizer, all the expenses and sometimes we'd even have to dig the vegetables under. Therefore, we really suffered!

Q: How did you manage in times like that?

MRS. MORIOKA: So, neh, there's an old saying "if you persist, you'll overcome..." Somehow or other, we did eat, because we lived on a farm we had things to eat. But we were in a bind...the banks collapsed you know...moratorium, or something like that...

MRS. MIYAKE: Yes, Sakata-san talked about those times like that too. But I was ( ) working all along, so I didn't feel the Depression at all. My work was steady, but I used to hear about people in Florin that they didn't have anything to eat...raiding garbage cans...killing cats and various stories such as that, but I myself, during the depression even coming from Japan, I never had to work....I never experienced a single hardship. Well, even going to sewing school was because when I went back to Japan after a year, my mother scolded me unmercifully for not even learning how



to sew. "You went to America and what did you do? You didn't even learn to sew one stitch!" I really got scolded! The neighbors would come and ask me to show them how to sew clothes for their children and I'd have to say I couldn't and they wouldn't believe me. "How can you say that?", they'd say. I had a new sewing machine sent to me, a beautiful one when I returned to Japan. It came in a big box...like to a rich man's...but I couldn't sew! I was scolded, so when I returned the second time to America, I went to night school to learn English and to sewing school, so I would be able to teach everyone when I again went back to Japan. And I sewed some at home during the Depression and didn't realize how difficult jobs were to find because I worked steadily and didn't really suffer. On the other hand, (laughter) I didn't live a life of ease. All the time others said how they suffered then and with three children, you can't say I really had to suffer for their sake either....

MRS. MORIOKA: You were really fortunate! Really....

MRS. MIYAKE: Fortunate or not...at any rate, others talk about suffering but I honestly didn't experience any at all....

MRS. MORIOKA: There are those who were lucky like Mrs. Miyake...and then there were those that really suffered! There was a time when the Japanese even had to go searching for food...like in Florin...Mr. Ichigaya who had a grocery store, they wouldn't even lend him money for foodstuffs...a time when it was really pitiful!

Q: Obasan, where were you living during the Depression? Were you in Stockton?

MRS. MORIOKA: What's that? During the depression? Oh, during the depression



we were in Sacramento. Yes, farming in Sacramento....

BEGIN SIDE II TAPE I

Q: And you hired workers?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes

Q: And you did all the cooking, Obasan?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes (laughter and muffled comment)

Q: Oh, that must have been a lot of work!

MRS. MORIOKA: There weren't many, 2 or 3, but we fed them.

Q: Were they Japanese?

MRS. MORIOKA: No....we hired Japanese too...but when it was difficult to hire Japanese, we'd have Filipinos and Mexicans would come too, but they'd eat Japanese cooking. Yes, Japanese food they'd eat. Even if they wanted something else, I couldn't cook it - western food and such, so I'd make Japanese food. Rice and mostly I'd make stews and curries and things like that and have them eat that.

Q: Your conversation was in English?

MRS. MORIOKA: Ha! (laughter) Yes, English (much laughter)..that is to say, English? The others....somehow or other, they under-



stood Japanese. Anyway, the Filipinos would use broken-Japanese and they'd talk and they understood Japanese better than ( ).

Q: ( )

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, there were some who came to study, but not as many as there are now.

MRS. MIYAKE: They were mostly immigrants.

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, mostly immigrants. Now, there are many students. But at that time, there weren't many that came here to study.

Q: They must have gone to Europe in those days.

MRS. MORIOKA: That's right. To Europe. Yes, not many came to America to study.

Q: (..... Some must have gone to Argentine and to South America.

MRS. MORIOKA: They limited the numbers that could come to America. So many of them went to South America....after we came here, even among my relatives. I have one now who is in Sao Paulo, Brazil...and has been very successful there.

Q: Oh, it got so you couldn't come into America?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, you couldn't get in, so they went that way. One family pulled up stakes altogether from Japan and went there.

Q: (..... some people went to Canada?)

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, (I think Canada was more lenient). I think in America before the war, there was such discrimination against Japan-



ese, you know.

MRS. MIYAKE: There was something else. In the 24th year, the Japanese Envoy (Taishi) proclaimed that because of the Immigration ban, no more Japanese could come to America. Until then, anyone could come. But after 1924, when was that now?..June, or so....the people who were already here were allowed to stay and persons with American citizenship in Japan could return here, but the ordinary person wasn't allowed to come here. And then, after the war ( ), was changed; until then, new immigrants could not come, except for the kibei-nisei. But that's all and no others could come, it developed.

Q: (Do you still feel the urge to go back to Japan? )

MRS. MORIOKA: After all, after you've been here so long, America is nice. But, at first when there was so much discrimination, we wanted to hurry and make our fortune and go back....but things have changed now, so...

MRS. MIYAKE: Were you discriminated against? Actually experienced prejudice, you, yourself?

MRS. MORIOKA: Uh, I...let me see....There was a time, like being called a Jap. There was a time...

MRS. MIYAKE: If discrimination existed, there were no outward manifestations directed that we actually felt. If you had a business or a farm, depending on what area you were in, there might have been some discrimination in different forms...



MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, that is so....

Q. ( )

MRS. MORIOKA: The fellow we leased our ranch from..the official, neh, was very kind and very good to us and the hakujin neighbors were good to us and we thought Americans certainly are generous; oh, yes, yes. However, among them every now and then, the people who aren't too well-educated discriminate more. People who are more educated, on an individual basis treated us well on the whole.

Q: There were more Chinese working on the railroads...weren't there?

MRS. MORIOKA: The Chinese?

Q: The Chinese, or were there some Japanese?

MRS. MORIOKA: The Japanese too worked on the railroads, years ago it seems..

MRS. MIYAKE: There were more Chinese workers earlier tho'. Recently, they celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Railroad and at that time, the Sacramento Bee reported there were many Chinese railroad workers then. Japanese worked on railroads, too. My husband did, and Mr. Takatsuki did too at one time in Oregon for a while.

MRS. MORIOKA: My husband told me he worked on the railroads when he first came here also.

Q: Do you have grandchildren?

MRS. MIYAKE: ( )

I write a letter or send something and write in my broken



English and she says, "Oh, Grand'ma can write in Japanese and English both!". She's only seven years old, but she says she can write only in English. "Grand'ma knows both," she says. (laughter). But really, if you can't understand each other, you miss a lot of the closeness.

MRS. MORIOKA: (There's no closeness). (pause) When you are grandmothers, you will be able to understand your grandchild, so you'll be able to tell them about your childhood and things. But as for us, even if we wanted to tell them, we can't even begin to start constructing sentences, and since we can't really, I guess it's the same for all of us Issei.

It's true; there's no way to communicate with our grandchildren.

Q. (Comment: It's partly our fault. We don't make our children attend Japanese school or teach them...and they don't want to go. So that's why it's small wonder.)

MRS. MORIOKA: It's such a complicated language, Japanese.

Q: Yes, it's much more difficult than English.

Q: Did you have any recollection about your boat trip coming over here? Any stories about your trip?

MRS. MORIOKA: Let me see. On board, there wasn't anything special. There were movies and a kind of talent show the "boy-sans" put on for us - like a shibai - so we wouldn't be bored. But, nonetheless, I was so seasick, I was really miserable (laugh)



...really miserable (more laughter). It isn't like it is now. The food was so bad and I couldn't eat anything, so when we landed in San Francisco, my husband bought some doughnuts and oranges. I didn't know what they were! I gave some to my friend and they were so delicious and we asked what they were called and I remember he said they were "do-natsu" and I told my friend. We couldn't eat anything on the ship and we were sick, so those doughnuts were so delicious. I'll never forget how delicious those doughnuts tasted! (Laughter)...Oh, they were delicious!

Q: ( )

MRS. MIYAKE: I have a "perplexing temperament...my temperament doesn't seem to fluctuate much, but I can't remember being overly happy, or very complaining either. For my birthday, they'd ask what I want and I wouldn't know -- I wouldn't want anything in particular. So if I didn't get anything, I wouldn't miss it. There's nothing I feel that I just have to have I don't know if it's good or bad, but that's the way I am... I'm not happy-happy or sad-sad.

MRS. MORIOKA: Me, when the ship stopped in Hawai, we'd been sailing so long and were so tired, when we finally went ashore and saw these beautiful flowers blooming, what a beautiful place - like Paradise - Honolulu was I thought. And we took a bath and ate some sushi and osashimi and delicious food; all the



things I liked and I was so happy and I thought then I'd love to live in such a lovely place with all these flowers. Who wants to go to America, I thought. Hawaii's a great place, I thought. (laughter). If you're traveling for a long time on ship it feels so good to get on land even for a while.

MRS. MIYAKE: You stopped in Hawaii?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, in Hawaii.

MRS. MIYAKE: Oh, is that so?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, we stopped in Hawaii. It was March, the end of March, but the flowers were in full bloom. Oh, what a lovely place it was, I thought and I said, "I'd love to stay in a place like this." And my husband said, "Oh, it's a great place if you can just loaf around, but if you had to work in a hot place like this, it would be like jigoku!....It's o.k. for playing, (but for contract work) it's would be hellish!" is what he said.

Q: There were Japanese doing that kind of work?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes (on contract basis like cutting sugar cane) and in a hot place like that the heavy labor it would be like 'jigoku'..... It's okay for playing but not for working! (laughter and repeat)

Q: When you arrived in San Francisco, did they travel in horse and buggy? There were no automobiles?

MRS. MORIOKA : Yes, there were no automobiles. There were trains; we traveled by train.



MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, there were no automobiles. There were trains. We traveled by train.

Q: Then how about your baggage. Did you have them sent from Japan or did you bring it all with you when you came?

MRS. MORIOKA: We didn't bring much baggage with us....uh, just a few - 4 or 5 - changes of kimono and ~~oh~~ is what I brought, but not really very much baggage...(just what we needed ).

Q: A chest and such?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, no. Nothing like that...(laughter)

Q: Then you acquired all those things after you got here?

MRS. MORIOKA: That's right. We didn't bring anything like that. Just light things we could carry....a change of clothes and things like that; chests and ( ) like that were impossible...(laughter).

MRS. MIYAKE: When we disembarked, the first thing we did was to go to a dress shop and...

MRS. MORIOKA: That's right...

MRS. MIYAKE: We changed into a dress from our kimono.

MRS. MORIOKA: We weren't allowed to wear kimonos and walk around. Nowadays you see people walking in town in kimonos, but when we first came here we couldn't wear kimonos down-town so we had to have a dress bought for us or we couldn't go outside at all! (Laughter)

Q: Oh, then, you'd wear them at home only?



MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, in the house I wore my kimono and tabi and my zori.

MRS. MIYAKE: After I came here, I never wore kimonos at all.....

MRS. MORIOKA: Is that so?

MRS. MIYAKE: ....just my Japanese sleeping gown, never kimonos.

MRS. MORIOKA: I didn't like dresses at first, so I'd wear my kimono in the house. I'd wear my kimono and zori (laughing)

Q: (Did you go to school in Japan separately from the boys?)

MRS. MIYAKE: It depended on the place you came from. Even in the same area, where I was raised, the boys and girls went to school separately, so we never got together with the boys....that was in Normal School (shihan gakko).

Q: Do you think it's better when you're small to be separated or that a co-educational school is better? Morioka-san, you went to a co-ed grammar school?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, co-ed....but after I got older, I went to a girl's sewing school and that was all girls. But, what-do-you-call-it over here? - it's like the Jr. High...then, we were mixed again...co-ed, it was.

Q: Do you think that was better? That going separately was better, did you think?

MRS. MORIOKA: Let me see...I, perhaps separately is better...I have a feeling.

Q: You played together anyway, things like baseball and basket-ball?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, we didn't play. In public school in Japan, after all, we didn't have any activities together, the girls and the boys.



Q: Oh, you were completely separated?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, separate. Therefore, even if you attended together, you were all kept apart; for example, if the left half of the room was all boys, the right side was all girls...even in the same classroom. The boys were in one place and the girls in another.

Q: Oh, you didn't sit according to groups?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, we were not in groups. We were all divided, girls and boys separate, just the boys together and just the girls together. And outdoors when we played even then we didn't play with the boys. (Laughter)

Q: So it is certainly different from here.

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, it is, altogether different. Whenever we did play with the boys, we'd compete with them. When you're small, you know how you try your hardest to out-do each other! (Laughter) So it was embarrassing you see. It's not that way now in Japan; it's just like over here; they all play together. During our youth there were still very strong feudal influences. Girl-boy contacts were forbidden! (

). Young people who weren't married and were seen, or a girl seen with a boy was considered brazen and was told she wouldn't be considered for marriage. Our parents were very.....ah....

Q: Strict?

...very, very...My goodness! For young people to get together say on New Year's, they'd have a karuta club of 100 people or and so/at one of these clubs, we young people would get together. In between, there was no opportunity for young people



MRS. MIYAKE: Yes, they were strict.

MRS. MORIOKA: ....very, very.....my goodness! For young people to get together, say, on New Year's, they'd have a karuta club of 100 people or so and at one of these karuta clubs we young people would get together. In between, there was no opportunity for young people to get together at all.

Q: ( )

MRS. MORIOKA: No, there weren't many of those.....

Q: Karuta-kai -- were held where? At a friend's home?

MRS. MORIOKA: Well, now, at a friend's home or at an acquaintance's that you liked. You'd arrange for someone to hold a karuta-kai and be invited and go. It's certainly different from nowadays!

Q: If you had a boy-friend in the neighborhood, did you play together in a neighborly way or didn't you even do that?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, we didn't. I don't know about Mrs. Miyake.

MRS. MIYAKE : We didn't play together either.

Q: Boys and girls in the neighborhood didn't associate?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, there were neighbors who were boys. Once in a while, we'd speak to each other. We'd say "good morning" in greeting or "hello", but we never played together.

Q: You never studied together?

MRS. MORIOKA: Never...never. (laughter). Sounds strange to you nisei doesn't it? Nisei or Sansei hear this and it seems to me it must be strange to you. Japan was like that in our day and age.



Feudalism was strong you know. Young people's social lives were very restricted, very strict.

Q: So therefore, then, during the arranged meeting (miai) was the first time you'd ever talk to a fellow?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, that's right.....no, (laughter)..we didn't even speak! We'd take in some tea and barely look at the face. That was about it.

Q: At the o-miai?

MRS. MORIOKA: At the o-miai, yes. Oh yes, we'd never speak! PAUSE.  
So we would be so embarrassed (bashful), we'd never even get a good look at his face and never even know what he looked like. It was like that, so his character we didn't know. After all, we'd never had any social experience - that's why there was often "trouble" later. We'd never conversed or knew how to (laughter) or anything about them! (laughter).

Q: Was there only one miai?

MRS. MORIOKA: Well, if you didn't "take" to each other, you could have any number, but...

MRS. MIYAKE: If you were going to marry that one, then just one meeting was sufficient, but if that first one didn't go well, then the girl would be spoken ill of and it would fall through. For this reason, if you consented to an o-miai, it was almost sure to go to completion.

MRS. MORIOKA: Like you'd have to...



Q: Then, did your mothers request someone to arrange a meeting?  
Did your mother speak to the fellow's mother and arrange the o-miai?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, not that way. There was a "go-between" (baishaku-nin), you see, someone to arrange. "Would your daughter like to meet so-and-so's son from someplace or other?", they'd ask, the baishaku-nin would ask. There was always a person who liked to do things like that in the community or village, so...oh, some relative or another person who enjoyed match-making who would approach and say, "your daughter is getting to be of age - how about so-and-so for her?". And the parents would never have to ask. Especially the parent of a girl. Never.

A boy's parents can come and say, "We'd like to find a wife for our son, but is there a nice girl somewhere?"  
Yes, a boy's family can do that, but never a girl's - not at all!

Q: Then you just wait?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes. (Laughter).

Q: There used to be some Nisei baishaku marriages.

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes that's so.

Q: (I don't know about now, tho') Then, did you marry within someone from a villages or/neighbor village?

MRS. MORIOKA : Let me see; usually within villages or towns or from neighboring areas. Oh, you'd never know where you might go.

Q: How about you, Obasan? Were you and your husband from the



same village?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, we were, the same village. You see my husband came back to get me from America. My uncle had sent a letter saying, "You always wanted to go to America and there's a fellow back from America here looking for a bride to take back with him. Would you consent to a meeting? How about a mial?" He wrote such a letter and so (laughter) that's the reason I consented.

Q: He had already been in America?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, he was over here.

Q: How many years had he been here?

MRS. MORIOKA: Oh, let me see, -- about four years- (pause)...so (laughter)

Q: ( )

MRS. MORIOKA: That's not the way it was. He went back to Japan with the purpose of finding a wife. ( ) have the meeting and if it went off well, he's get married and came to Japan with those intentions. So, (laugh), my uncle -- my then husband-to-be's cousin and his friend went to my uncle and said, "My counsin came back from America to find a wife; what about your niece?", he said to my uncle and so ....

Q: Then, Obasan, you heard from your husband all about America before you came? After all, not to get your hopes up too much?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, he said not to get too hopeful..."You, you keep saying, 'America, America' like it's a wonderful place and you're



expecting a lot. It's no place you can just play and lay around. If you go, since we're faming and I'll need you to help and there are lots and lots of chores...is that still all right with you?", he asked. (chuckle)

But no matter what he said, I wanted to go...(Laughter) I said, "All right, all right....and so I'm here, so - well (laughter).

MRS. MIYAKE: Myself, you know, I used to see magazines when I was going to (sewing school).. In these magazines, America looked great. I'd see these married couples in these pictures in front of beautiful homes and it turned out they were homes of the people these couples were working for, and they'd be (

) or wealthy people's homes and they'd be nothing and be disappointed and they'd gone to America and be disillusioned and stories like that I'd see, so I didn't feel I wanted to come to America at first.

MRS. MORIOKA: Oh, is that right? If you looked at magazines like that. I never saw any magazines, (laugh) so all I wanted to do was to go to America.

MRS. MIYAKE: Young people would go over as picture brides to older fellows. They'd come over as picture brides really thinking what a beautiful, lovely place to go. The fellow would be pictured in front of the beautiful home where he worked!

MRS. MORIOKA: That was during those picture bride marriages. Uh, really there was so much trouble. The young bride's would come over



only to find some old man waiting for them - and things like that.

Q. ( )

MRS. MORIOKA: My father, in the 30th year of the Meiji Period was baptized by an American missionary. My father was a Christian, yes, but even so, the family was Buddhist. There was such opposition from his parents and he was practically disowned and disinherited, I understand. But so then, my father didn't go to church much, but when he was baptized, the papers he received from the American missionary were sent to Los Angeles, where my uncle was living. Those papers he kept and though he had nothing to will when he died, my uncles told me these papers are from God; these papers are precious. You should keep them for your father. You are inheriting this baptismal from your father. So, when we were young, there weren't many Christians.

My birthplace was Yokozawa and they'd holler, "Yaso-da, Yaso-da". So we were very much hated by the villagers. It's said they were told that when we died, we'd be put on crosses and hammered with nails, you see because they were from the country. But, after all, it does say "Be fruitful and multiply" in the Bible. Because my father became baptized in the 30th year of the Meiji Era, that conversion would be blessed and my uncle's family all were Christians and even my daughter who



could marry whomever she wanted, Buddhist or Tenrikyo or anyone she chose, I didn't intend to interfere in anyway about her religion - so after all she did marry a Christian whom she met in the church she attended. He's from Hiroshima, a Christian minister and my son, too, in Los Angeles. Her parents are in Arizona, but she's working in the service of the church and they're Christians. And my son in Sunnyvale goes to church, the Holiness Church and his children all go to Sunday School - my grandchildren - and he also serves the church. After all, this too must all be due to the Lord's will. (Laughter). That was the 30th year of the Meiji Period, the year the American missionary baptized my father.

BEGIN SIDE I TAPE 2 (small reel)

MRS. MORIOKA: (Continues) But since we've come here/and lived in the country, we never attended church. Only after the war is it that we started to come here (to Parkview)

MRS. MIYAKE: You probably don't understand her reference to the 30th year of the Meiji Period, do you young people...? Meiji 33-nen is the year 1900, so Meiji 30-nen is 1897. I was born in Meiji 33-nen which is 1900, so that was three years before - 1897.

MRS. MORIOKA: Oh...

MRS. MIYAKE: Our family was Buddhist, but really, we helped take care of the temples and shrines and I myself didn't think about religion too much. At school, religion seemed more like a superstition



to me. So when I was in Normal School, the teacher said to write about your religious beliefs. So I said, "while my family is a Buddhist family, I am not yet ready to choose which religion to follow." I was so impertinent! I had the feeling there was something or someone greater or above myself to believe in, and I would think about it and that conviction was there, but at the time I wrote that there is no God, I was young and hasty. At one time, I went to a school, the principal was a Christian and instead of using the Japanese text, he used to read stories out of the Bible and taught us. So therefore, at that point, I had leanings toward Christianity, but as Mrs. Morioka says, people in our village used to call the Christians there, "Y<sub>2</sub>so-masa", or "Yasoberu, Yozomasa-san". It was that way then, so I didn't want to become a Christian. Then, when I was returning to America a second time I was together with Kiki Ryugo's sister. She had gone to Japan and was returning and we came here and bought a house on S Street, between 5th & 6th Streets. Masako-san (Ryugo) said, "It's just as though we came here to America from Japan as a yōshi (~~bride~~), so it is only right that because America is a Christian country, that we should adopt its religion is the way I look at it. So, even if we're from a Buddhist country, I'm going to Sunday School." that's what she said to me and Masako-san introduced me to the church.



So, my children came regularly to this Sunday School. Masako taught Sunday School here, too, until she went to San Jose State College....before Paul Mayeda came...and Helen Mayeda was the pianist for a short time. So I sent the children, but I didn't come myself at all. And then I was thinking 'before I die, sometime I must be baptized' and I was saying something like "...when I go back to Japan..." and then I had to have an operation, so I called Reverend Kato and told him I wanted to be baptized and he said, "Miyake-san, didn't you say you want to be baptized when you go back to Japan? and I said, "I'm getting things in order, just in case"....and he said, "That's not for dying, it's for beginning to live and I said, "Dying or living...." And he said, "It doesn't matter - it's a wonderful decision whichever way!" So, I was baptized and even now Rev. Kato will say, "Miyake-san, you were preparing for dying and you prepared for living!" ...and it's really true. Living, dying it's all the same in the end. At first, my doubts were because I thought we had to live the Bible just the way it's written and I knew I couldn't do that. So if I had to I couldn't, I thought, and then, I decided if I didn't try it might be too late and so....(Laughter).

MRS. MORIOKA: Were you baptized after I was?

MRS. MIYAKE: It was after.



MRS. MORIOKA: I was baptized by Rev. Kato too.

Q: Where was the church located when you first came here?

MRS. MIYAKE: The church was at 5th and M.

Q: Oh, 5th and M? Christian Church?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, ( )

Q: ( )

MRS. MORIOKA: Then before the war in 1941, this church was built. (referring to Parkview).

Q: When you came from Japan, there wasn't a church for you to go to?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, there was.

Q: In Oregon, too?

MRS. MIYAKE: Yes, there was in Oregon. There was a Methodist Church.

SILENT INTERVAL

MRS. MORIOKA: On New Year's, there's a New Year Religious Service, what is called a "Shihohai" in Japan. They decorate pine, plum and bamboo in a wreath and stand it in front of the house and put a knotted sacred rice straw festoon....I don't know if you understand - they use rice straw, make it into a rope - and they put offerings, rice....and they put it over the entry-way.

Q: What was the meaning of this? Was it for blessings for the coming year?



MRS. MORIOKA: Something like that. For luck for the year. The matsu is green forever; plums fend off the cold and symbolize the blooming of flowers and the bamboo which is fibrous and tough and does not break...that kind of symbol; that's what they decorated.

Q: Where did you decorate it?

MRS. MORIOKA: In our area, we'd put the pine, plum and bamboo together and then we'd stand it in front of the house and then the rope wreath we'd put in front over the door at the entry. The homes were different from those here you see.

Q: You have a visiting custom. If everyone went visiting or calling, who stayed home? If everyone went calling, then there was no one to watch the house.

MRS. MORIOKA: No, not everyone went visiting. We'd always go to the school-teacher's homes on New Year's.

Q: In the morning or the afternoon?

MRS. MORIOKA: Not necessarily. During the day and then if they weren't home, we'd leave our calling card. All day the others would not be there to greet guests all day; it's too troublesome, so they'd leave a tray on the porch for the calling cards. Some would come out to greet you, too.

Q: Adults did that too?

MRS. MIYAKE: Yes, the adults would walk, but not the women; they'd stay home

MRS. MORIOKA: The men would go out.



Q: The men would go and the women would stay home? in case of company?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, yes, not strictly, but not over here. Years ago when we first came here at New Year's we'd go visiting among friends, drink sake and make special dishes, but not in Japan, they didn't do that!

Q: Oh, then, that was American style?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, that was American style. Anyway, people who knew each other well or relatives would do that where I came from. But with the average person we wouldn't. We'd just greet each other and say "omedeto" and that was it.

Q: The sushi and all that you didn't make?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, we didn't do that. Not in Japan.

MRS. MIYAKE: You didn't? Where I came from we did. O-nishime and...

MRS. MORIOKA: For eating at home we did, but we didn't make it especially for company.

MRS. MIYAKE: When they'd drop in for greeting. Recently, my niece, for Appreciation Day from the firm where her husband works, the boss brought all the food and goodies for New Year's and they drank (rice wine) sake all day and eat and then the next day they played golf and turned away customers! While he's working for this company they decorate the house and really treat them royally and they were so busy, she wrote. Whereas, we were brought up in the country so we didn't have company like that. But the custom is that we're not supposed to cook for three days during the



New Year, so all the preparation was made ahead and we'd do just a little cooking, o-zōni and such. But at New Year's we'd take it easy and we'd decorate the whole inside of the house with the sacred wreaths and have offerings to the gods and especially dried persimmons....

MRS. MORIOKA: .....yes, dried persimmons and chestnuts and the like. One of Japan's superstitions you see...persimmons (hoshi-gaki)... chestnuts, (kaki-kuri)...names like that

Q: You'd eat them, decorate them?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, eat and decorate. Like black beans (kuromame -name de kurasu yo ni : to live a long, healthy life) and shrimp, you'd use, so you'd live until your back bent like a shrimp and also for good luck.

MRS. MIYAKE: ...and konbu - yorokobu, to be happy. Yes, they use konbu (sea-weed) for yorokobi.

MRS. MORIOKA: Then, in March there's the Girl's Festival, for parents to honor their daughters. Girls' day it is and for boys, they have the "Koi-nobori". The carp leaps high waterfalls; the carp is a powerful fish and so, for the boys to grow to be mighty like the carp, they raise these paper carp. And then, in July, there's a Tanabata festival. How can we explain it best? Tanabata Festival?

MRS. MIYAKE: It's a ceremonial festival.

MRS. MORIOKA: That is, neh, The female god and the male god can meet in the Milky Way once a year on July 7th. We put bamboo poles up and hang poems and pictures on certain colored papers....



...pretty gold and white...called goshiki-no-kami (5 inches square; then we'd stand the tree up ( ) and have a rope ( ) and decorate it with eggplants and cucumbers and summer vegetables. It was really something to look forward to!

Q: Where did you decorate them? In your room?

MRS. MORIOKA: Not inside, outside. Out in the corner of the garden.

Q: Was this done from house to house?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, from house to house. Each family would cut its own bamboo tree. It was lots of fun! .....and then there's the O-bon, you know. July 15, it starts - or was it the 13th? 13th. Three days it lasts. When the moon is full, they light lovely, white paper lanterns and they have floral and paper tributes everywhere. Are you familiar with this or are you not? It's beautiful; lots of small lanterns hanging and we'd have all the relatives come and pay homage to the graves. That is Buddhist, of course; that was a kind of tanoshimi, too.

Q: That is followed by the Bon-Odori?

A. Yes.

Q: After the O-bon, from August to September, what other festivals are there?

MRS. MIYAKE: Let's see, when it gets to be October, there are festivals of



the patron deities. (Ujigami)

Q: What kind of a god is the Ujigami?

MRS. MIYAKE: Uji means your family name. When you are born, you go to the temple to ask the god to watch over you, when you are from one to three months old, so that you can be a protege (ujiko) of the patron deity. Generally, in each Japanese village or town, a god is enshrined and belongs to that village, such as Hachimansama or Tenjinsama.

Q: Then are there Shinto Gods in the shrines?

MRS. MIYAKE: Yes, yes, Japan doesn't have any one religion. Buddhist and Shinto, it's all mixed.....Buddhists go to the shrines to Hachiman-san the same way.

MRS. MORIOKA: Mostly, the funerals are Buddhist. When children are born they belong to a Shinto God....that kind of rationale.

Q: Then, after that in November, are there anymore special occasions?

BOTH LADIES: There aren't, really.

MRS. MORIOKA: Besides New Year's, there's O-bon and then, the village Ujigamisan Festival...that's about it.

MRS. MIYAKE: In November, there's the "Shichigosan Festival". When you are three, five or seven years old, you get dressed in your best clothes and go to the shrine, the boys to theirs and the girls to theirs.

Q: Is there a Moon Festival, some special observance?

BOTH LADIES: No, there's none. Not a special festival.



Q: You have decorations and observances?

A: Yes, in the Fall. It's not a festival. You gaze at the moon because it's beautiful and full around the 15th. It's so lovely to look at you make some boiled rice dumplings and pay homage to the moon.

Q: In the spring you have the flower-viewing and everybody goes out...

MRS. MIYAKE: Especially nowadays, when the cherry blossoms are in full bloom, there are many viewers.

Q: Do they go to the parks or to the mountains?

MRS. MORIOKA: Naturally, they go where they are blooming profusely. To Ushinoyama, where there are many cherry trees, for instance.

Q: Do they go on trips?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, on trips.

Q: How about the summertime? Is there something?

MRS. MORIOKA: In the summer, many people do go, yes, to the sea. It's so hot. In Japan, the waters are warm, you see. Here, it's cold and the wind blows so. In Japan the beaches are very warm, so they make good harbors. Here and there, at Enoshima and places like that, they report thousands of visitors in the newspaper. Unbelievable numbers of people go there!

Q: Then, in the winter, there's just New Year's, I guess.

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, well, among the young there are many who go skiing now. In our day, there weren't many who went. Now, sports are very



popular and there are a lot of them who can ski. It's a lot like this country over there now.

Q: In those days, there weren't many sports. What kind of things did you do for fun that you can remember?

MRS. MORIOKA: So-desu-ne. There wasn't anything much in the way of games.  
(Laughter).

MRS. MIYAKE: With a ball or hand-ball, that was about it. At New Year's, there was the shuttlecock and battledore.

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, yes, at New Year's, there was the battledore and shuttlecock, called the 'hago-ita'; we'd go "kon-kon" and hit the shuttlecock.

In our day, there wasn't much for us to play with, was there?

Q: How about the boys?

MRS. MORIOKA: The boys, too. Not much either, not the way sports are popular today...That's the kind of era we were born into.

Q: What time did you start school, about 8 o'clock in the morning?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, between 8 and 8:30.

Q: Did you take a lunch?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, we took a lunch.

Q: Did you eat at your own desk?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, at our own desk.

Q: Did the teacher stay in one room or change seats or rooms?

MRS. MIYAKE: After primary school, you had your own desk and stayed there,



studied history and geography in the one room.

MRS. MORIOKA: We did not change...the 5th grade room. Your room was assigned and you ate lunch in your classroom with the teacher and when you finished lunch the teacher would tell us an interesting story of some kind. Was it that way with you, Mrs. Miyake? That's the way it was with us.

Q: When school was over and you returned home, did you study some more?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, well (laughter).....we didn't do much studying. (laughter)

MRS. MIYAKE: Now, we didn't study the way they do now. Only when there were exams, - at night. I had so many brothers and sisters, when I got home and I was the eldest, so I had to watch the little ones.

MRS. MORIOKA: We'd study for tests, but school wasn't that important.

Q: Then, housework and helping mother was more important.

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, that's right - cooking and cleaning and helping, etc.

Q: Did your mothers do the shopping?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, the mother goes to the store.

Q: Stores in Japan are different from over here, aren't they?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, they're different.

Q: There are no department stores or supermarkets, are there?

BOTH LADIES: There are now, a lot of them!

MRS. MORIOKA: But when we were young, there were no such things. There were zakka-ten (small shops).

MRS. MIYAKE: ....like the specialty shops over here.

MRS. MORIOKA: ...groceries, no big department stores. Now, there are, even in cities of fair size, big department stores. Since the war, Japan has changed tremendously!

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